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VIDEO

magazine

SOUND TURN-ONS

- Hot Audio-For-Video Gear
- Exotic Speakers

TRICK SHOOTERS

New Camcorders
Boast Animation,
Time Lapse, 12X
Zooms & More

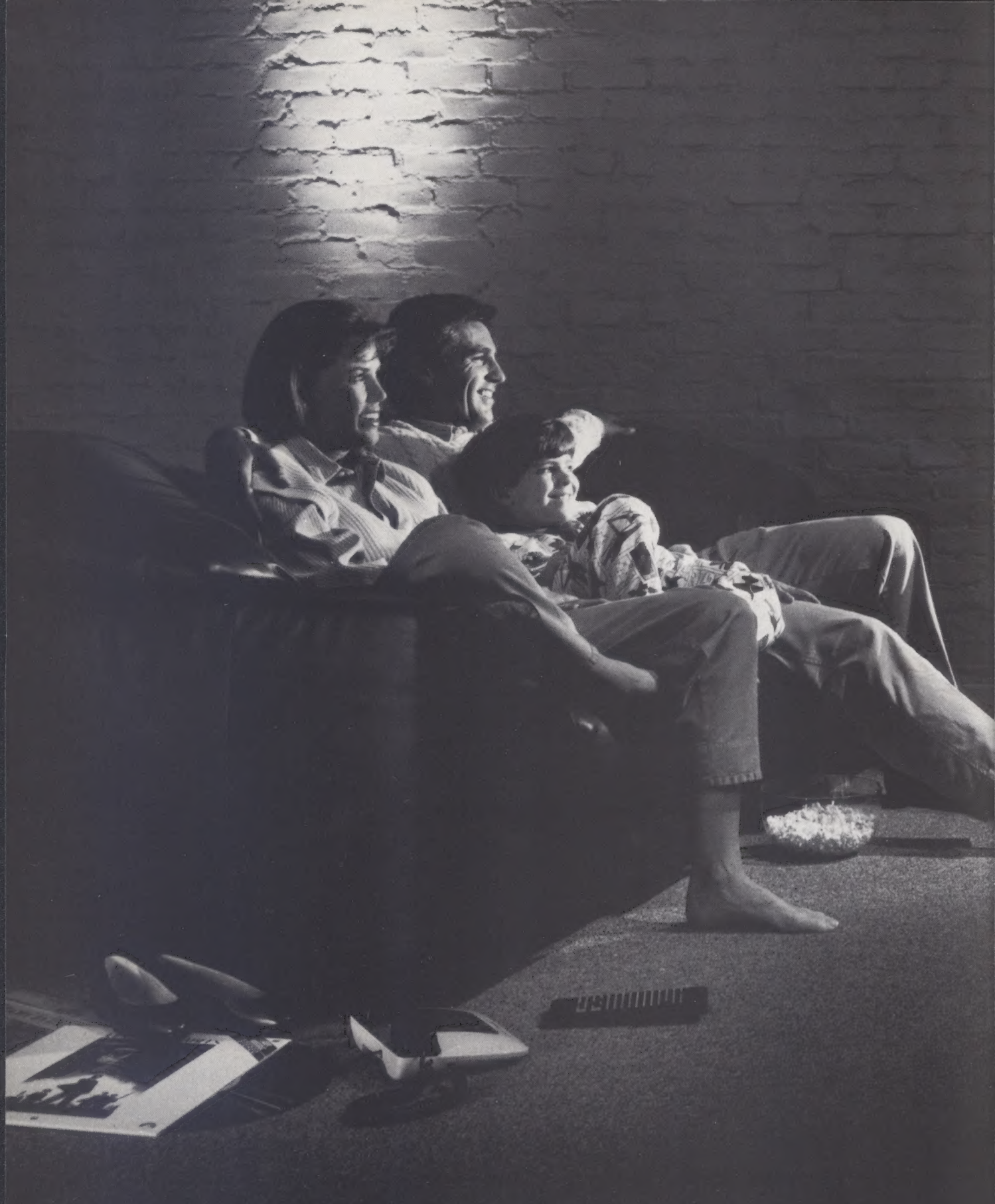
VIDEOTESTS

Projection TV,
VHS & 8mm
Camcorders

MIND- BLOWING MEDIA ROOM

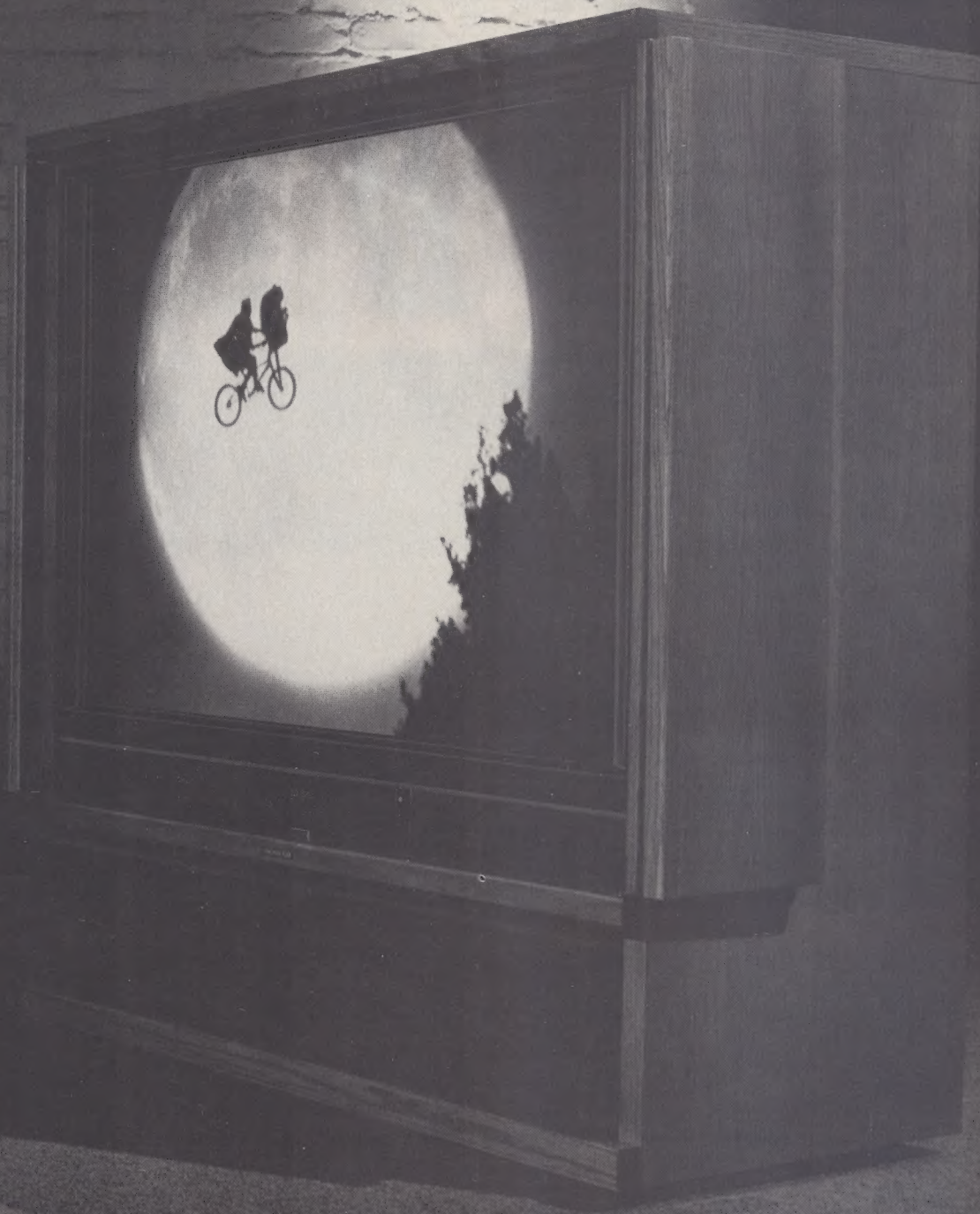
CAMCORDER BUYING GUIDE





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VIDEO

magazine



FEATURES

THE NEW SOUND OF VIDEO	38
Manufacturers are addressing the growing demand for high-quality video sound with a new array of sophisticated audio/video receivers and surround sound decoders. By Ivan Berger	
BUSTIN' LOOSE	42
Built-in amplifiers, wireless connections and magnetic shielding are freeing video speakers from their traditional limitations. By Mark Fleischmann	
THE WIZARD OF VID	48
A/V systems designer Steve Lincoln's mind-blowing media room. By Hilary Dunst	
TRICK SHOOTERS	52
New camcorders offer studio-quality features and effects. Also, a camcorder buying guide. By J.T. Way	
ROMANCING THE CASSETTE	60
How entrepreneurs invented the idea of renting tapes. By James Lardner	

PROGRAMMING

REVIEWS	67
Broadcast News, Empire of the Sun, Cinderella, The Last Emperor, Cop, Best Seller, Frantic, Planes, Trains & Automobiles, Promised Land, more	
KIDVID / In search of excellence	79
DIRECTORY / The latest releases on tape and disc	83

VIDEOTESTS

TERA 629A 27-INCH MONITOR/RECEIVER,	34
Canon E708 8mm camcorder, Pioneer SD-P452 projection TV, Panasonic PV-460 VHS camcorder with Electronic Image Stabilization. By Berger-Braithwaite Labs	

DEPARTMENTS

CHANNEL ONE / Breaking the sound barrier	6
FEEDBACK / Letters from readers	12
LATE NEWS / New 8mm tape transport, TVCR, more	14
GAZETTE / Ann-Margret, Ted Danson, Penelope Spheeris, rare Hitchcock films, Armand Assante, Norman Jewison, more	16
NEW PRODUCTS / Chinon VHS camcorder, Canon 8mm VCR, more.	24
CAMCORNER / How to shoot an airborne adventure	28
AUDIO INPUT / Audiophile features on video's horizon	30
Q&A / Technical queries answered	32
BOOKSHELF / Special-interest video guides	133
OFF THE AIR / Taming the cable beast	136

Cover:

The new sound of video, featuring Proton's 20-inch monitor, NEC's DS-8000U S-VHS VCR, Onkyo's TX-SV7M A/V receiver and headphones by Sennheiser. Photograph by Bob Forrest.

Video Magazine
Volume XII
Number 7

WILLIAM HURT · TIMOTHY HUTTON

THE HUNT IS ON AND SOMEONE'S GOING TO DIE.

*"A totally absorbing,
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and it plays it with all the stops out."*
Roger Ebert, *SISKEL & EBERT*.



In a world torn apart by war, a proud, tradition-steeped family is threatened by destruction from within. And fate seems to conspire against star-crossed lovers Jack (*TIMOTHY HUTTON*) and Josie (*MELISSA LEO*).

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From California to Italy and back again, the suspense builds as the hunter stalks his prey. In a sweeping story of romance and terror, family and friendship, love and revenge.

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October 21, 1988

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AND STOCKARD CHANNING AS MARGARET MUSIC BY ENNIO MORRICONE FILM EDITOR BETSY BLANKETT
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY JAMES GLENNON PRODUCTION DESIGNED BY HENRY BUMSTEAD
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WRITTEN BY GREGORY NAVA & ANNA THOMAS DIRECTED BY GREGORY NAVA

Soundtrack Album Available on Virgin Movie Music Albums, Cassettes and Compact Discs

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**hi-fi
STEREO**



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ANTHONY MICHAEL HALL

ROBERT DOWNEY, JR.



Johnny BE GOOD

**When He's Good He's
Very, Very Good But When
He's Bad He's Better**

It's an orgy of wine, women and cash kickbacks when two top colleges scramble to get Johnny Walker on their rosters. From lusty limo rides to all-night strip joints, Johnny gets the workout of his life... and an education he'll never forget.

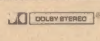
Anthony Michael Hall and Robert Downey, Jr. star in the coming-of-age comedy that knows how to score: "JOHNNY BE GOOD."

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from Judas Priest!**

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WITH SPECIAL APPEARANCES BY JIM McMAHON AND HOWARD COSELL
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EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS STEVE ZACHARIAS, JEFF BUHAI AND DAVID ORST
WRITTEN BY STEVE ZACHARIAS & JEFF BUHAI & DAVID ORST
PRODUCED BY ADAM FIELDS DIRECTED BY BUD SMITH *Produced by Balboa*
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ORION
HOME VIDEO

CHANNEL ONE

Breaking the sound barrier

Video buffs have voted with their eyes and video image quality has improved dramatically. Now it's time for them to vote with their ears, too. Our latest reader survey shows that many are doing just that. When purchasing video equipment, almost 60 percent of *Video Magazine* subscribers say they consider audio quality more important than they did a few years ago.

Of course, videodisc manufacturers like Pioneer have always provided CD-quality sound. Increasingly, videotapes, broadcasts and cable programs are being produced in stereo. But most people don't own the equipment that would give them the full benefit of stereo or digital material. Now, however, components are widely available that allow you to reproduce the movie theater audio experience (or close to it) at home.

This month we offer two features and an "Audio Input" that speak directly to this issue. To create the ultimate viewing/listening environment, you need an amplifier or receiver capable of decoding surround sound or converting digital audio signals. Contributing Editor Ivan Berger's "The New Sound of Audio" discusses the best audio processing equipment for video on the market, while Contributing Editor Mark Fleischmann's "Bustin' Loose" focuses on another ingredient—speakers. The new world of dedicated video speakers includes self-powered, wireless, compact and shielded models, all designed to address specific video challenges.

In line with these developments, we also looked in on the personal A/V system of Steve Lincoln, a man who custom-builds them for a living. Check out his well-wired houseboat, limousine and bedroom in "The Wizard of Vid."

As sound specialist Berger points out in "The New Sound of Video," tomorrow's TV sets may come with many extras—like amps, receivers, speakers and surround sound decoders—built in. Some have already taken the plunge. Zenith TVs with Bose sound systems have been on the market for about a year. Toshiba has just introduced sets containing "Sonic Holography" circuits to broaden and sharpen the stereo image. Akai has introduced the first VHS VCR with built-in surround decoding. Now a newcomer called Tera has introduced a 27-inch monitor/receiver with dual self-powered, two-way speaker systems (see this month's "Videotests" for an evaluation).

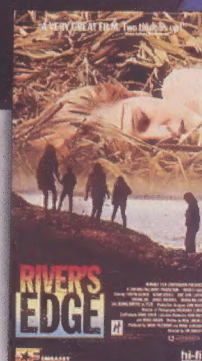
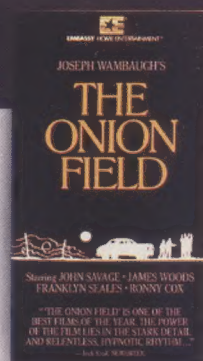
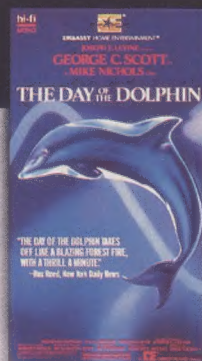
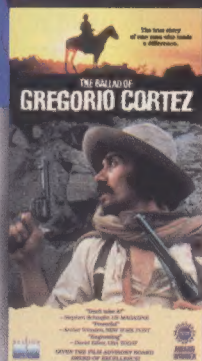
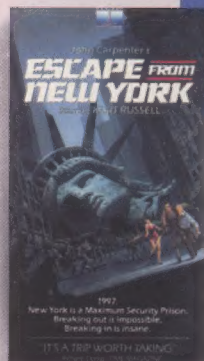
If those who care continue to demand better audio for their home entertainment systems, more manufacturers will produce VCRs and TVs with the kinds of audio bonuses available mostly in add-on components. Pass the popcorn!

Judith Sanger
Editor-in-Chief

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VISTAR INTERNATIONAL PRODUCTIONS



VIDEO

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Address subscription orders, change of address, correspondence and inquiries to: VIDEO, P.O. Box 56293, Boulder, Colorado 80322-6293. Change of address takes 60 days to process: send old address label, new address, and zip code. All material listed in this magazine is subject to manufacturer's change without notice, and publisher assumes no responsibility for such change. Printed in the U.S.A. POSTMASTER: Send Address changes to VIDEO, P.O. Box 56293, Boulder, Colorado 80322-6293.

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Wife swapping anyone? Or how about some champagne, drugs and chocolate-covered lobsters?

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CHILDREN OF A LESSER GOD
4294152

LETHAL WEAPON
6308222

OUTRAGEOUS FORTUNE
5481072

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THE RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD II	5190092	ADVENTURES IN BABYSITTING	5486022	THE PRINCESS BRIDE	1250052	ROXANNE	1980062	2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY	0025192
FROM HERE TO ETERNITY	1917002	HANNAH AND HER SISTERS	6517032	NUTS	6328102	STEEL DAWN	4951012	ALIENS	3603252
48 HOURS	2022622	THE DEER HUNTER	2124152	THE KARATE KID II	1894152	BRIGADOON	2542272	JAGGED EDGE	1813542
LOST HORIZON	1916012	LAWRENCE OF ARABIA	1514312	 WALL STREET 3661042	FUNNY GIRL	1511262	THE BOAT (DAS BOOT)	1520252	
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Q58/Q60

Q59/Q61

FEEDBACK

First aid for VCRs

Following a thorough reading of "Deck Doctor" (July '88) I was able to repair my three-year-old GE VHS VCR which had no picture, as well as my brother's Sony Beta VCR which was chewing up tapes upon ejection. The GE went out one day before your magazine hit the newsstands. The Sony had already been written off as "not worth fixing" due to its age and modest selling price.

Both machines now work like new. My expenses amounted to \$12, spent at a local electronics store, and I worked a total of four hours on both machines. I received a professional estimate of \$75 to fix the Sony, and it would have cost at least \$150 for the GE. Without your article I would have had no success with these repairs.

David Niemira
Somerville, N.J.

Unkindest cut

Shame on Mark Fleischmann for not pointing out in his review of *Brideshead Revisited* (July '88) that the cassette released by Virgin Vision has a huge cut that disfigures the conclusion. Readers should be warned before they erase their off-the-air tapes of *Brideshead*, as I did.

In *Book VI*, Lord Marchmain's return, as well as his illness, the revision of his will and his dismissal of the priest are all missing—despite a description on the box indicating that they are included. In fact, one of the photos on the box is taken from a scene that has been cut. Fully half of Laurence Olivier's part has been deleted for no apparent reason, and with no disclosure or warning.

Edward W. Kennedy
Seattle, Wash.

According to a spokeswoman from Virgin Vision a number of copies of Brideshead Revisited were inadvertently released with approximately 20 minutes missing. Virgin

Video Magazine welcomes your comments. Please include a phone number, but not a self-addressed envelope as the volume of mail does not permit replies. Letters may be edited for clarity and space. Address correspondence to Feedback, Video Magazine, 460 West 34 Street, New York, NY 10001.



will re-release the tape in its complete version using a new master from Granada Television. Our review was based on an unbridged cassette. Consumers with incomplete versions can call Virgin's customer service department at 213-857-5200.

Desk set

I've owned my Amiga computer for two years now and find it one of the most powerful and versatile computers on the market. By using most of the products mentioned in "Desktop Video" (July '88) I get studio results without a studio budget. One thing you overlooked, however, is that the Amiga is capable of stereo sound right out of the box and even has a built-in voice.

The next Amiga product I'm waiting for is the Video Toaster. With this inexpensive product the gap between professional quality effects and mere home video draws closer. As the song goes, "The future's so bright I gotta wear shades."

David W. Graham
Kenmore, N.Y.

Your "Desktop Video" article was very informative. I work with PC-based graphics systems and wasn't aware of the versatility of the Amiga computer. Tim Onosko faulted Commodore for not including composite color outputs on its machines. This is due to design trade-offs and the limits of NTSC composite signals. As the resolution of RGB signals increases it becomes more

difficult to encode them into composite video. The circuitry required to encode the Amiga's 770-by-450-pixel output could easily add several hundred dollars to the product's retail price. Separate encoders are available from several manufacturers for those who need to generate composite video from RGB signals.

Conrad Schiano
Bethpage, N.Y.

I enjoyed Timothy Onosko's "Desktop Video" but was disappointed by the exclusion of the Tandy Color Computer 3. I have been digitizing and recording on disc and videotape with Micro Works' Digisector for almost three years. The Tandy is capable of analog RGB video, color composite video and RF video right out of the box—and all three video outputs may be used simultaneously.

Although the resolution may not be as detailed as that from a more expensive machine, this \$200 powerhouse is more than adequate for amateur videomakers who are conscious of their budgets.

D.S. Ricketts
Boring, Ore.

Outrageous misfortune

I was recently outraged after screening a tape I made of *Outrageous Fortune* from Showtime. While I was watching my first-generation cassette, the brightness started to shift up and down. When I adjusted the vertical hold, I could see white rectangles at the bottom of the blanking interval flashing in sync with the brightness level.

Is Showtime using Macrovision? If so, I will be in the market for a Macrovision eliminator. It really is outrageous when premium channels, which sell their services by advertising that you can record their programs to watch when you want, prevent you from making viewable tapes.

Thomas R. Vickerman
Pierre, S.D.

Showtime does not use Macrovision, according to a company spokesman. The problem may be originating, he suggests, from Thomas Vickerman's equipment, or from his local cable system.



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LATE NEWS

A pilgrimage toward MECHA

When Sony introduced 8mm, company spokesmen hinted that the format held untapped potential. Some of that potential is now clear—further miniaturization. An ingenious new 8mm tape transport developed by Sony weighs half as much as conventional 8mm transports and occupies only a third of the space. Even more amazing, its head drum is a mere 1.05 inches in diameter, making it tiny enough to squeeze inside the shell of an 8mm cassette.

The "FL MECHA" configuration comprises four head drums plus a flying erase head, and wraps tape around the head for 292 degrees. Conventional 8mm configurations use two video heads plus a flying erase head, and a 190-degree tape wrap. All the transport's other components have been similarly shrunk, making it "the world's smallest, lightest and thinnest mechanical deck," according to Sony.

What does the transport, which Sony is already selling to other VCR makers, mean to consumers? At the least, it implies a new generation of even smaller 8mm video devices. For example, FL MECHA is not included in Sony's 2.4-pound 8mm Video Walkman. Future Video Walkmen could be tinier still.

Forging the computer/video link

Two developments suggest we'll be seeing more from the linkage between disc-based video and computers. A new laser by Matsushita promises to quadruple the storage capacity of optical discs by more densely writing information to discs. The blue-light laser uses about half the wavelength of existing versions and can also be applied to projection TVs and color printers, according to the company.

On the data-reading side, a scientist at Bell Laboratories in New Jersey has devised a computer chip that can process video images from compact discs using only one percent of the data formerly needed. Inventor Adrianus Ligtenberg believes the chip could help personal computers cope with the massive memory capacity they need to recreate video images.

TVCR Contender:

The tiny AV Gear combines a color LCD TV, an S-VHS-C VCR and an optional micro-camera.



Battle of the TVCRs

Not to be outdone by Sony's 8mm Video Walkman, Matsushita is introducing Japanese consumers to its own miniature TVCR, the MacLord AV Gear. Weighing in at three pounds, the AV Gear boasts a three-inch color LCD TV, a Super-VHS-C VCR, stereo hi-fi sound and an optional micro-camera tiny enough to wear like headphones. The TVCR's debut, at about \$1,400, prompted predictions in the Japanese press of another format fight dubbed "Video War Three."

An irony in the situation is that VHS-C cassettes can only play for an hour at the slow speed while Sony's 8mm tape can run for up to four hours. This reverses the playing time advantage Matsushita's first VHS VCRs claimed over Sony's first Beta decks in the original Format War. Nevertheless, expect to see Matsushita's tiny contender here, under a Panasonic label, "next year or later."

Video vote-getters

Consumers vote with their dollars and here's the gear they "voted" for most frequently this June. Among Super VHS equipment, the leader was Magnavox's 9248 VCR, while high-end decks were led by Panasonic's PV-4860 VHS VCR. The mid-range was dominated by Magnavox's 9270 VHS model, and GE's 97500 VHS

VCR topped low-end competitors. VHS camcorder honors go to Panasonic's PV-400. The figures were compiled by the American Video Association, based on sales reports from video dealers.

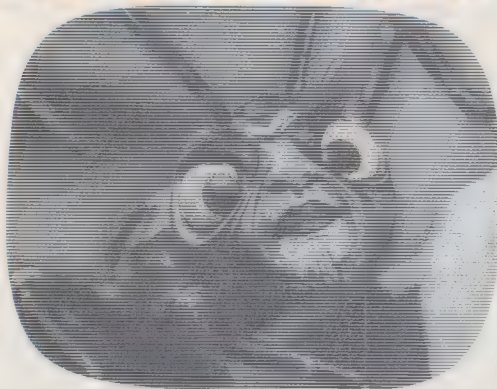
Sharps and flats

Sharp has developed a 14-inch LCD screen which it says displays images as bright as those from CRTs. The new thin-film transistor display, which has 308,160 pixels, will appear in personal computers sometime next summer and eventually in TVs. A new driving method, according to Sharp, delivers a contrast ratio of 100:1 and reduces flicker. Separate red, green and blue pixels, each driven by a quartet of transistors, lessen dropouts.

Fast Scans

VCR Ratings. A.C. Nielsen, the network ratings giant, has begun to track which households play back their timeshifted tapes. The company scans for the presence of a special code its measuring devices add to the vertical blanking intervals of broadcast programs as viewers tape them.

Rental Roulette. About 58 percent of all tape renters don't know what they're going to rent before they walk into a video shop, according to a survey by *Video Store* magazine. ■



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GAZETTE

Ann-Margret: modest superstar

Conservatively dressed in a dark blue business suit and speaking in a soft, demure voice, actress/singer/dancer Ann-Margret is nothing if not modest. "To tell you the truth," she says, "I don't really enjoy sitting and talking about myself."

Nor does she take any particular pleasure in reviewing her movie career, which began in 1961 with Frank Capra's *Pocketful of Miracles* and went on to include *Carnal Knowledge*, *Tommy* (both earning her Oscar nominations), *Viva Las Vegas* (with Elvis Presley) and a pair of offbeat romances—*A Tiger's Tale* and *A New Life*—that recently arrived on tape.

"I've done 40 films," Ann-Margret explains. "I see them once in the screening room. I've never seen any of those films more than once. I don't even enjoy looking at pictures of myself. I don't have a scrapbook." As far as interpreting her screen persona (usually a sensitive and sensual character), she adds, "I don't know who that person is. I have never known."

Despite this resistance to personal scrutiny, she is a patient and gracious interview subject, one who would rather discuss her work than the glamour and mystique it cultivates. "It's great to go from stage to television to films," she says. "Each has its challenges and its satisfactions. When you go onstage, your heart is pounding and you immediately feel the electricity from the audience. The satisfaction of film is having a working relationship with the director and the cast, and of making a character come to life."

Ann-Margret is especially satisfied about her character in *A New Life*—a confused, insecure divorcee who finds herself returning to the vagaries of single life after 26 years of marriage. The character's situation is nothing like reality for Ann-Margret, whose enduring marriage to Roger Smith is a Hollywood rarity.

"I can identify with her because I have so many friends undergoing divorce after many years with one person. When this woman got married it was a different world, so much different than 1988. These days it's difficult to meet new people, to get along by yourself. What's expected of a



A Good Life: Although Ann-Margret has made 40 films, she has no interest in seeing any of them again.

woman has changed. But I also believe," she adds earnestly, "that if you want to change your life, no matter what age you are, you can."

One of the actress' favorite "parts" was "Ann-Margrock," an animated caricature of herself that appeared on an episode of *The Flintstones* in the early '60s. She delights at the recollection. "Yes," she beams, "I did the voice-over for that. The character was three-quarters hair!" She begins to laugh, loosening the professional veneer. "Oh my God! That was 25 years ago!"

—Ric Gentry and Carolyn Quinn

Danson in the spotlight

How do you stay normal when you're a star in Hollywood? For Ted Danson, it's easy. Despite TV stardom as self-proclaimed "sex god" Sam Malone on NBC's popular *Cheers*, and a lead role in a mega-hit movie, *Three Men and a Baby* (being released on video next month), Danson says he's kept on the ground by "being married to a Greek woman who couldn't give a rat's ass about my career." His wife of 20 years and his

children are, he says, intolerant of star antics. When he leaves the set, he stops being Ted Danson, star, and becomes Ted Danson, family man.

Danson feels there is only one real "story" about him: his activity in a bi-partisan environmental group, the American Oceans Campaign. "I believe actors should channel their recognition value into social causes. Our goal at the moment is to stop oil drilling in Santa Monica Bay, but it's much bigger than that. We want the United States to develop a policy with regard to the oceans."



Hold Everything:

Ted Danson gets his hands wet in 'Three Men and a Baby.'

What of rumors that Danson's lady-killer image clung to him during the filming of *Three Men and a Cradle*? Flanked by fellow TV hunk Tom Selleck, Danson is asked which of the three co-stars was the most popular with the women of Toronto, where the film was shot. With a glint of bemused bewilderment, Danson reveals the truth: Steve Guttenberg. —Steven Grant

Rare Hitchcocks rediscovered

Those who wondered what Alfred Hitchcock did before *Psycho* (or *North by Northwest*, *Vertigo* and *Strangers on a Train*, for that matter) will be happy to learn that Hollywood Select has released 17 of his earliest films, some never before available on video. Among the treasures are a film the director called "the first true Hitchcock picture"—*The Lodger*, a 1926 silent about Jack the Ripper—as well as some atypical entries. *The Ring* (1927) is a story of two prizefighters in love with the same woman. *Champagne* (1928) is a romantic melodrama which Hitchcock claimed was "the lowest ebb of my output." *The Manxman* (1928), his last silent picture, concerns a



Hitchcock Unearthed: A number of the director's revealing old films are now on tape.

poor fisherman, a lawyer and the woman they both love. There's also *Junio and the Paycock* (1930), based on the Sean O'Casey play; *Waltzes from Vienna* (1933), a biography of Johann Strauss, which Hitchcock described as "a musical without music made very cheaply," and *Rich and Strange* (1932), perhaps the most fascinating of the bunch. The dialogue and characterizations in this tale of a middle-class couple traveling abroad are from the stone age of cinema, but the innovative cutting and other effects mark Hitchcock's early genius.

To call these titles rare is an understatement. Prior to this release, many existed only in film libraries or in private collections. According to Conrad Sprout, the president of Hollywood Select, there are just two copies of *Junio* in this country. He had to send a messenger to England to obtain a copy of *Waltzes*. "I know where to find them," he says, "because I'm a movie buff and a collector myself."

—Tom Soter

Music of the Spheeris

Penelope Spheeris remembers her first film-school attempt at combining music and image: Traffic's "Low Spark of High Heeled Boys" accompanying a shot of Hollywood Boulevard. "I went, 'This is it!,'" she laughs. "I felt like I'd found my calling."

She had. After that early-'70s epiphany, Spheeris got involved with the nascent music-video industry. But she is best known for directing a string of feature films, both documentary and fiction, focusing on the traumas of adolescence—and

set to a pounding soundtrack. This summer, movie audiences got a double dose of Spheeris with *The Decline of Western Civilization Part II: The Metal Years*, about L.A.'s heavy-metal scene, and *Dudes*, which she calls "a punk-rock Western."

The coincidence was unintentional. *Dudes* was ready more than a year ago but fell victim to scheduling vagaries and an ownership transfer. Its delayed theatrical release barely beat out its September arrival on videotape. Ironically, Spheeris feels that the film, with its broad landscape, is less effective on a TV tube than *Decline II*, which is "designed for videotape" but not yet available.

Spheeris says *Dudes*, which stars Jon Cryer (of *Pretty in Pink* and *Hiding Out* fame) and Daniel Roebuck (from *River's Edge*) "was meant to touch on clichés of a lot of different film genres: the Western, the 'buddy' movie, the fish-out-of-water story." Essentially a tale of revenge, *Dudes* manages to include a generous helping of fast/loud rock music. Doesn't Spheeris feel typecast?

"I know I am," she replies. "I don't think I'll be doing the *Whales of August, Part 2*." But she doesn't mind, partly because kids are the movie-going audience these days, and partly because she relates to the troubled teens who populate her films. (Spheeris has an 18-year-old daughter.) "We've had similar upbringings, coming from screwed-up families," she laughs again. "I think directors should do what they know the best. I know how to relate to outsiders."

—Scott Isler



Focus on Music: Penelope Spheeris (right) may be typecast as a punk filmmaker, but 'she don't care.'



Positive Success: Andy Anderson never expected his micro-budget feature would receive national theatrical and video distribution.

Andy Anderson: a new director beats the odds

Robert Townsend (*Hollywood Shuffle*) wasn't the only filmmaker to beat the odds and resourcefully get a low-budget first film into national distribution last year. So did Andy Anderson.

As producer, writer, director and co-editor of *Positive I.D.*, Anderson took out loans, persuaded family and friends to invest, sold his home and car, applied for grants and cashed in ten years' worth of teaching retirement funds to make his \$215,000 film. A crafty blend of melodrama and thriller that played the festival circuit in late 1986, *Positive I.D.* was picked up by Universal and had a city-by-city theatrical run before this spring's video release.

"We never thought a major would pick us up because the production was so small," says Anderson. "It was made in the back room of my house. I was actually a little shocked because I'd been through six months of people saying, 'You're a talented guy—we'll get back to you.' It was like getting a date to the prom."

Anderson's movie is an absorbing, somber character study of a housewife trying to liberate herself from a well-publicized rape and a cardboard suburban life. She discovers a bureaucratic loophole that makes it easy to assume a dead person's identity. As she begins a double life, her quest for liberation plays out within the framework of a low-key revenge thriller.

"I tried to make it as close to real life as you can get away with in American mov-

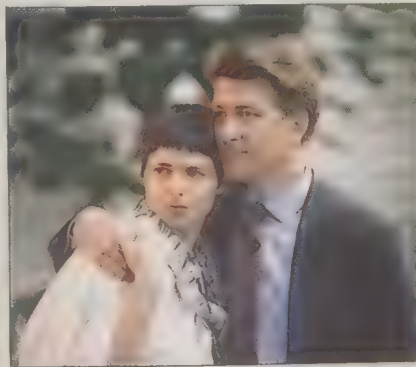
ies," says the 41-year-old Texan. "I didn't try to make everybody good or bad. When the violence happens, a lot of people are surprised. But the woman finds that revenge changes nothing."

—Paul Sherman

Rossellini & Lynch: romance off-screen and on

How did actress/model Isabella Rossellini get her boyfriend, director David Lynch, an on-screen role as her paramour in the childhood drama *Zelly and Me*, a new film soon to be available on video? The two met, she relates, over some humorous confusion when Lynch was preparing *Blue Velvet*, the project that brought Rossellini her first notoriety as an actress.

She was leaving a restaurant in Los Angeles with friends, one of whom was producer Dino De Laurentiis' girlfriend.



Art Into Life: Isabella Rossellini and David Lynch continue their romance in the film 'Zelly and Me.'

Lynch, who had directed De Laurentiis' *Dune*, was sitting at a nearby table with a mutual acquaintance. Everyone said hello. The smitten director, not knowing who Rossellini was, told her she looked just like Ingrid Bergman—her mother.

"He told me later he thought I was a dancer, for some strange reason," Rossellini laughs. "But he went back to his office and looked in his [casting directory] and realized I was an actress. So he sent me the script, and I read it and loved it, so I tested for him and got the part."

Going full circle, she got Lynch to make his acting debut in *Zelly and Me*. On her suggestion, "[Director] Tina [Rathbone] tested and liked him. I was pleased. I had thought maybe I wasn't seeing him objectively, but it turned out well. The chemistry was there, because we are in love."

—Frank Lovece

How to get into the how-to biz

When the folks at PC-SIG, a computer software distribution company, took a look at the video market, they saw a niche to fill. Independent producers make quality videotapes on a wide range of topics but lack the means to market them. In turn, consumers seeking low-cost how-to tapes don't always know where to get them.

Enter Video-SIG (Special Interest Group) to offer small producers a manufacturing and distribution service. "Numerous productions were just sitting on the shelf," says Video-SIG acquisitions coordinator Susan Powers. "We provide a way for producers to get their videos into the public eye." Video-SIG's quarterly catalogue contains over 700 titles, all—except for classic films and TV shows in the public domain—produced by independents, video hobbyists or professionals who use video to convey information.

The company will consider tapes on almost any subject except pornography and violence. After a tape is reviewed for production quality and potential viewer interest, Video-SIG offers a non-exclusive contract for duplication and marketing services. Producers receive royalties for tapes sold. All tapes are \$14.95. (Video-SIG, 1030C E. Duane Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086; 408-730-9291.)

—Hilary Dunst

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Andy Anderson never expected his micro-budget feature would receive national theatrical and video distribution.

Andy Anderson: a new director beats the odds

Robert Townsend (*Hollywood Shuffle*) wasn't the only filmmaker to beat the odds and resourcefully get a low-budget first film into national distribution last year. So did Andy Anderson.

As producer, writer, director and co-editor of *Positive I.D.*, Anderson took out loans, persuaded family and friends to invest, sold his home and car, secured grants and cashed in ten years of teaching retirement funds to finance his \$215,000 film. A crafty blend of comedy and thriller that played the festival circuit in late 1986, *Positive I.D.* was picked up by Universal and had a city-by-city video run before this spring's theatrical release.

"We never thought a major studio would pick us up because the product was small," says Anderson. "It was made in the back room of my house. I was a little shocked because I'd been hearing months of people saying, 'You're a loser—' we'll get back to you.' I was getting a date to the prom."

Anderson's movie is an enigmatic character study of a woman trying to liberate herself from a life of sexualized rape and a cardboard social identity. She discovers a bureaucratic system that makes it easy to assume a dead identity. As she begins a double quest for liberation plays out within the framework of a low-key revelation.

"I tried to make it as close to what you can get away with in America,"

says the 41-year-old Texan. "I didn't try to make everybody good or bad. When the violence happens, a lot of people are surprised. But the woman finds that revenge changes nothing."

—Paul Sherman

Rossellini & Lynch: romance off-screen and on

Lynch, who had directed De Laurentiis' *Dune*, was sitting at a nearby table with a mutual acquaintance. Everyone said hello. The smitten director, not knowing who Rossellini was, told her she looked just like Ingrid Bergman—her mother.

"He told me later he thought I was a dancer, for some strange reason," Rossellini laughs. "But he went back to his office and looked in his [casting directory] and realized I was an actress. So he sent me the script, and I read it and loved it, so I tested for him and got the part."

Going full circle, she got Lynch to make his acting debut in *Zelly and Me*. On her suggestion, "[Director] Tina [Rathbone] tested and liked him. I was pleased. I had thought maybe I wasn't seeing him objectively, but it turned out well. The chemistry was there, because we are in love."

—Frank Lovece

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West Coast Notes



Moon Over Toronto: Norman Jewison (left) explains a point to Vincent Gardenia (right) on the set of 'Moonstruck.'

Norman Jewison bakes up a hit

Norman Jewison has offices in Los Angeles, a house in Malibu and an apartment in New York, but one imagines he feels most at home on his farm, located just outside Toronto. Unlike John Patrick Shanley, the ethnic urbanite who wrote *Moonstruck*'s screenplay, the veteran Canadian director projects a Methodist reserve that contrasts sharply with the film's emotional warmth. Jewison brought Cher, visual sophistication and musical continuity to Shanley's script, which was originally titled *The Bride and the Wolf*.

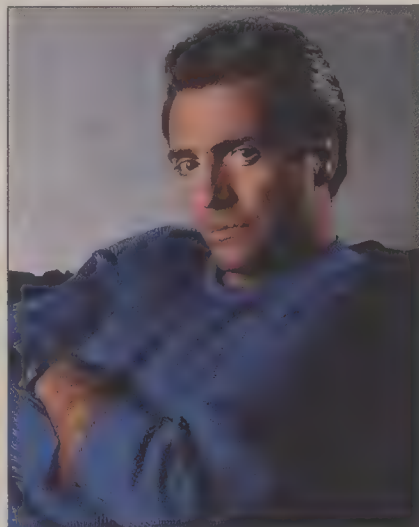
Filmed on location in New York City and on soundstages in Toronto, *Moonstruck* was made for a fairly modest \$10.8 million. The location work contributed significantly to the movie's authentic tone. "I shot the bakery in Brooklyn," he explains. "It's one of the last Italian bakeries with coal-fire ovens. Cher was behind the counter. We rented the bakery for the day, but people kept coming in. A guy walked right in front of the camera, looked at Cher, and said, 'I want two loaves of whole wheat.' I said, 'Wait a minute, we're shooting a picture here. Can't you see the camera and the lights and everything?' He says, 'I don't care what you're doing. I came all the way over here to get my bread.' So I said, 'Sell him the bread.' Cher took in \$6.50. We made about \$14 in all. Only in New York. They don't care what you're doing."

The director of such previous films as *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *A Soldier's Story*, Jewison believes

that *Moonstruck* has hit a chord in today's alienated society. "Timing is everything—in life and in filmmaking," he concludes. "You can either skate or you can't skate. I come from a country where our national sport is hockey and it requires a great deal of timing. It's natural. You either have it or you don't."

Armand Assante's obsessions

The Penitent, a tale of religious obsession and male friendship set in an isolated New Mexico community where a Spanish-American religious order known as the Penitentes continues to this day, is notable for an impassioned and insightful perform-



First You Cry: 'Penitent' star Armand Assante.

ance by Armand Assante, who co-stars with Raul Julia. Like Assante's previous *Belizaire the Cajun*, the film centers on a community of cultural throwbacks.

"It's the obsessions in people that absorb me," says the handsome Assante, who was most recently seen on television as Napoleon in the mini-series *Napoleon and Josephine*. "One of the things I responded to in *The Penitent* is this character's unconscious obsession with being a mortal, but he doesn't even know it, because he's not a bright man."

Assante, who has also been seen in *Private Benjamin*, *Unfaithfully Yours* and numerous TV movies and plays, is honest about his work. "I've done big commercial films where some of the roles were not challenges for me," he candidly states. "I could walk through them with my eyes closed, and often I'd be in trouble if I didn't. If I had thought about it, heaven help me."

Out west with Sam Elliott

When Sam Elliott plays a Western hero, it's a natural fit. He's done it on television in *The Yellow Rose* and *The Sacketts*, in which he starred with Tom Selleck. "The delineation between good and evil is very clear. A man's word is his word, romance is romance," says Elliott of the genre.

Meanwhile, this lanky cowboy with the bedroom eyes and gravelly voice is back with two action films: *Shakedown*, due out on video shortly, and *Road House* with Patrick Swayze, headed for the big screen. Elliott, who hit big in *Lifeguard* and *Mask* (in which he portrayed Cher's biker boyfriend), has had more than his share of ups and downs. "I've always called my own shots as far as what move to make and in the end only had myself to blame when it wasn't the right move," says Elliott.

But while he may have missed out on some plum roles, life in general has been good to this actor, who lives with wife Katharine Ross and their daughter on a small ranch near Malibu. "I appreciate every job that's come to me in this game," he hastens to add. "Because I'm doing what I wanted to do when I was a kid. And I'm not only doing it, but I'm making a living at it and supporting a real happy family."

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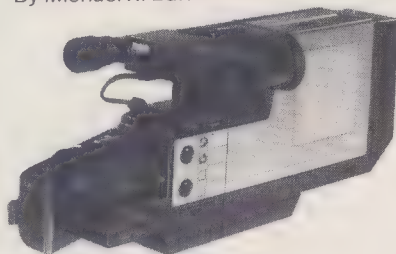
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VIDEO TIPS

By Michael X. Barr



VIDEO VERSATILITY

I've learned one thing about making video movies over the years: There's a world of difference between a camcorder and a truly complete video system. There are many makes, but none offer more accessories and tape back-up than RCA camcorders do.

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Another valuable accessory, the RCA Lens Extender, increases the lens magnification power of a camcorder 1.5 times, enabling you to zoom closer than ever to catch distant subjects.

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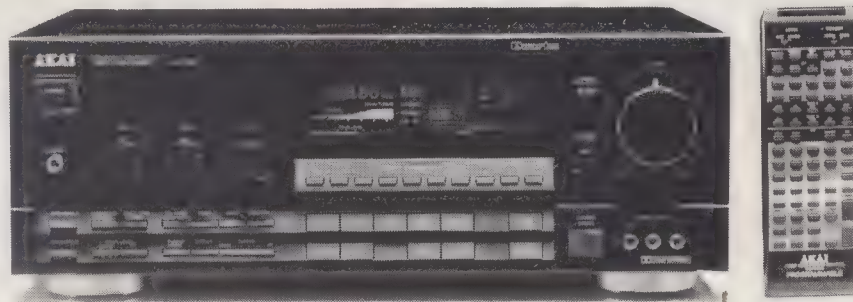
Chinon camcorder has color viewfinder

Chinon's CV-T65 VHS camcorder features a one-inch color LCD viewfinder as well as a built-in speaker for monitoring recordings in the field. The camcorder's character generator, also built-in, uses a full keyboard and holds up to 29 pages in memory with 46 characters in two sizes and eight colors.

The camcorder's f/1.4 6x zoom lens has a macro range. Editing bonuses include audio and video dubbing, a flying erase head and index and address search. The high-speed shutter records at 1/500 or 1/1000 of a second, while the half-inch CCD image sensor records in light as low as 7 lux.

Price: \$1,199.

For additional information, circle No. 154 on Reader Service Card.



Akai A/V receiver offers Dolby surround

Akai's AA-V435-B audio/video receiver offers Dolby surround sound as well as concert hall and matrix surround options. The switcher's connections include five audio inputs, four video inputs (including two sets of S-VHS terminals), front panel A/V inputs and an external audio processor loop.

The receiver also includes an AM/FM tuner, a three-position video/RF selector and audio insert. Its universal remote control offers 70 user-programmable functions.

Price: \$649.

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GE offers tuner adapter for camcorders

GE's 1CVA900 tuner adapter allows a camcorder to be hooked up to record off-the-air programs. The adapter features 155-channel frequency synthesis tuning and can also be used to provide an auxiliary signal for VCRs with picture-in-picture. The accessory offers both digital keyboard and scan tuning.

Price: \$130.

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Soundesign TV stand has built-in speakers

Soundesign's WC231TP TV stand houses two 6-1/2-inch full-range speakers. The stand, designed to accommodate TVs of up to 26 inches, has an adjustable shelf for a VCR and a large storage area for videocassettes or accessories. The unit is finished in walnut wood grain.

Price: \$100.

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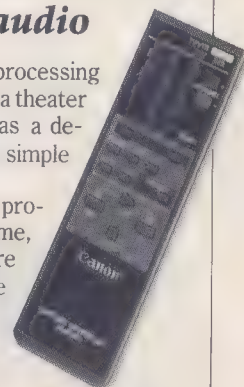
Canon 8mm VCR adds PCM digital audio

Canon's ES-100 8mm VCR uses pulse code modulation (PCM) processing to record digital stereo audio and also offers MTS stereo, SAP and a theater sound mode for surround sound effects. The 5.7-pound deck has a detachable handle and one-touch antenna connectors for quick and simple hookup.

The ES-100 also features 152-channel tuning, 3-event/14-day programming and a flying erase head. Special effects include freeze frame, frame advance, two-speed slow motion, forward and reverse picture search and double-speed play with audio. Editing bonuses include audio and video insert and an edit switch.

Price: \$1,000.

For additional information, circle No. 158 on Reader Service Card.



VIDEO NECESSITIES



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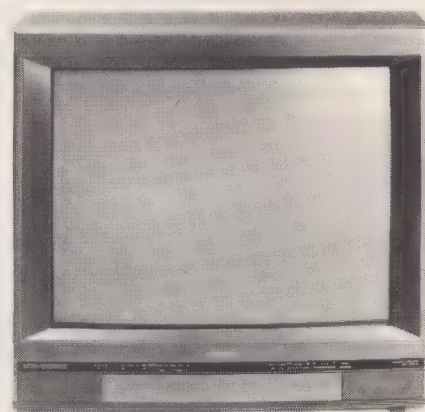
Sima Products Corp.
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Sylvania 31-inch TV includes picture-in-picture

Sylvania's RRJ801AK 31-inch TV offers a black & white picture-in-picture for monitoring one off-the-air program while viewing another. The set's "SupeRemote" lets viewers adjust all picture and sound options as well as time, program scan, parental control, "personal preference," display options, channel captioning and channel guide. The remote can also control many brands of VCR. The monitor offers surround sound and an S-video jack for connection to a Super VHS VCR.

Price: \$1,999.

For additional information, circle No. 159 on Reader Service Card.



Kenwood monitor has S-video inputs

Kenwood's KMT-3027 27-inch monitor/receiver includes two audio/video inputs and monitor/TV outputs as well as a Y/C connector for hookup to an S-VHS or ED Beta VCR. The set boasts 560 lines of horizontal resolution as well as a tinted black matrix screen for glare reduction, a comb luminance filter, a peak white suppressor circuit for reduced snow, and automatic black level retention for improved contrast.

The PLL synthesized tuner picks up 142 channels. Audio highlights include MTS, SAP, sound wide simulated stereo and separate bass, treble and stereo balance controls. Onscreen displays show channel number, time and sleep timer.

Price: \$1,150.

For additional information, circle no. 160 on Reader Service Card.

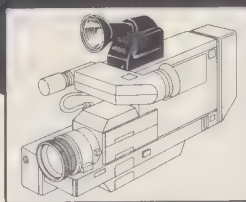
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for precise lighting, even up close.

For longer shooting before recharging, there's the 2-piece PB 8235, with a compact, feather-weight, **45-minute** NICAD battery that easily fits into a pocket.

Both models provide optimum 3400° Kelvin light, and include recharger.

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VERTEX



Vidicraft processor enhances detail

Vidicraft's Detailer helps improve the picture quality of tapes being dubbed from one VCR to another, allowing the user to fine tune sharpness or detail. A split screen function divides the picture in half, showing the incoming video on the left and the enhanced video on the right. The video signal passes through the Detailer even when the power is off, so there is no need to disconnect the processor when it's not being used.

Price: not available.

For additional information, circle no. 161 on Reader Service Card.

ENJOY A NIGHT OF BAD DREAMS!

"Bad Dreams" is the 1988 horror thriller from the producer of "Aliens" and "The Terminator." It stars Jennifer Rubin ("A Nightmare On Elm Street, Part 3") and Bruce Abbott ("Re-Animator"). You could say horror is in their blood!

When Cynthia Wakes Up, She'll Wish She Were Dead!

"Bad Dreams" is the story of Cynthia, a former member of the spiritual cult group Unity Fields, and the sole survivor of a mass suicide-by-fire ordered by their madman leader.

Cynthia's past was a nightmare. And now, after awakening from a 13-year coma, it's back... and even more horrifying than ever!

Spend tonight with Cynthia and discover what "Bad Dreams" is all about!

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CAMCORNER

How to shoot an airborne adventure

BY PHIL BOYER

You're a private pilot, or someone who loves soaring through the sky in a light plane—and you own a camcorder. Now you can produce both pictures and sound from the air that won't embarrass you or bore your non-flying friends. As the publisher of videotapes for ABC's *Wide World of Flying*, I've learned a few tricks that may help you create a lasting record of that great fly-in vacation or even your own training flights.

Let's begin from the ground up. Just as you organize flight materials before take-off, do the same with your aviation video kit. You'll need to keep everything together so you can easily locate items in the busy flight environment. Be sure to include at least two extra batteries—for a total of three—and keep them charged. You can never have too many. If you have a 12- to 14-volt system and plan to shoot in your plane a lot, get an optional car battery cord adapter, which generally plugs into the cigarette lighter.

Probably the next most important item in your airborne video kit is a still photographer's C-clamp, or bracket, which you can find in any photo store. This is essential for mounting a camcorder in an airplane. The heavy-duty models will support most light camcorders.

Since most camcorders have a limited wide-angle view, next on the must list is a wide-angle or fish-eye lens, which allows you to shoot the instrument panel and the interior of your cramped cabin to full advantage. As for filters, ultraviolet and haze filters perform much the same function with camcorders as they do with still cameras. But don't expect a haze filter to make a five-mile visibility day look like a 50-mile day. If you have a small battery-operated TV, include it in your case as well. It will help you compose shots when you can't use the viewfinder.

Most of us tend to forget about the

Phil Boyer is a senior vice-president of Cap Cities/ABC Video Enterprises, Inc. and publisher of ABC's Wide World of Flying.



Skycorder: Any light camcorder can be mounted on an instrument panel with a photographer's C-clamp.

audio, but sound adds a great deal to aviation videos. All camcorders have built-in microphones, but they are worthless in flight as they generally pick up the engine noise, which overrides all other sound. An attenuating cord (Model 42-21-52A), available from Radio Shack, and the proper adapter plugs will allow you to input the intercom's audio directly into the camcorder, bypassing the regular microphone. The attenuating feature of this common-looking cable is important, because it reduces the headset signal.

You may also need a Y-adapter to use the intercom headset. A *Wide World of Flying* viewer from Toronto says you can eliminate tapping directly into the intercom with a simple telephone microphone. Just attach the suction cup to your headset and the cable to the camcorder microphone input.

There are two traps to watch for when shooting with the newer, automatic camcorders from inside an aircraft: auto-exposure and autofocus. Light pouring into the cockpit from outside the plane fools a

camcorder's automatic exposure system, so people shot inside the plane appear as black silhouettes. You must manually override this feature, using the viewfinder to set the proper exposure. Otherwise, you can use the backlight button to brighten up the interior.

Similar precautions apply to the autofocus. The best solution is to focus the lens manually. With the autofocus in play, many camcorders will focus on the windows, and shots of the ground will be blurry. Even if the camcorder reads through the plexiglass, a wing or the engine cowling can fake out the system, making these close items appear clear, and the ground fuzzy.

To avoid reflections when shooting through the windows, get the lens right up to the plexiglass. Take care, however, that the lens hood doesn't rub against the window, since it can scratch the plastic. Electrical tape wrapped on the hood prevents this.

Shooting air-to-ground is difficult with a hand-held camcorder. Brace the camcorder against your body to hold it as steady as possible, and get your pilot to fly 1,000 to 2,000 feet above the ground rather than trying to zoom in on a scene from a high altitude. The object is to zoom back as wide as possible. If you zoom in too close, the telephoto segments will accent any movement and cause bouncy pictures.

A wide-angle or fish-eye lens is essential for almost all aircraft interiors. When shooting the panel, however, be sure to exclude the windshield. Otherwise outside light will set the auto exposure, and you'll end up with a black hole where you expected to see instruments. Include yourself in the picture occasionally by holding the camcorder up against the windshield and shooting back into the cabin.

Most camcorders have a macro lens setting for extreme close-ups. This is useful for creating dramatic shots of single instruments filling the entire screen, such as illustrating your altitude enroute to a destination. Add a little motion to still shots by simple moves like resetting the altimeter.

Using this same macro feature you can title your video by shooting the destina-

tion or flight path shown on the sectional chart. Since the focus is critical, hold the camera steady and make sure the outside light hitting the map is even.

Now, back to that C-clamp. Many pilots know what kind of result you get when the person in the right seat tries to hold the camera during landing. At best, the footage looks like an approach in heavy turbulence and the landing appears as a controlled crash. For sensationally smooth shots of approaches and landings, mount the C-clamp on the glareshield in front of the copilot's position. Align the camcorder so it points straight ahead, showing just a little of the engine cowling or nose in the lower part of the screen. If your model allows, it may help to remove the electronic viewfinder, or use the battery-powered TV for setting the clamp and camera to the right position. Make sure the zoom is at its widest setting, the manual focus is on infinity and the autofocus is off. For the full effect, plug the audio cable into the intercom and the other end into the camcorder mic input.

There's at least one bonus to cockpit taping that could save you time and money. Often, pilots hear intermittent squawks that occur only when they're flying and that the maintenance shop can't duplicate on the ground. If you videotape the problem as it happens, you stand a chance of getting it fixed. Let's say the number NAV-2 isn't capturing the station as it should. You would video the frequency, your altitude, the distance from the station, the audio from the NAV and show the comparison to NAV-1. The impact of giving the shop a tape of the problem in itself often seems to help get the problem solved.

Once I taped my plane being checked out at a Baron Service Clinic in Albany, New York by a Beech Factory technician from the American Bonanza Society. I recorded his explanations using the camcorder microphone and gave the tape to my service shop in Teterboro, New Jersey for its mechanics to view—a procedure they found very useful.

Finally, there are two rules that have served videographers well in the air and on the ground: don't pan, and use the zoom sparingly. Novices tend to think the only way to show a large scene is to pan the camera across the horizon or airport runway. Don't do it! Break the large scene into a sequence of smaller ones, stopping the camcorder between each move and letting the action occur within each scene. The same applies to zooming. Don't zoom in and out while the camcorder is running. It's better to stop, zoom, stop and start again.

Those interested in obtaining a videotape dramatizing these techniques can contact ABC's *Wide World of Flying*, P.O. Box 1719, Riverton, NJ 08077-9719, or call toll-free 1-800-999-9883. ■

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AUDIO INPUT

Audiophile features on video's horizon

BY IVAN BERGER

Ten years ago, home video, apart from TVs, was brand new, but home audio had been around for decades. The sound was monaural, but not for long. The rapidly changing video environment was ushering in a sophisticated new era of audio for video. We take many of the decade's innovations almost for granted today, but they were radical when they were introduced and they set the sound stage for advances we may shortly experience.

By 1980, thanks to Philip's Discovision laser disc, stereo sound had come to video. Soon after, VCR makers followed suit. The first stereo VCRs had noisier sound than mono decks, but Dolby noise reduction brought the noise level under control. However, it did not alleviate VCRs' limited high-frequency response, high distortion and wobbly pitch ("wow and flutter").

These problems were mastered early in home Video's second half-decade, with hi-fi VCRs, which used high-speed head drums to lay audio down as FM signals. This conquered the wow-and-flutter problem, allowed full-frequency audio recording and lowered noise and distortion.

By then listeners to many cable systems could receive some programs—chiefly MTV and premium services like HBO—with stereo sound, by hooking FM stereo radios or tuners to their cables. But almost at once, the Federal Communications Commission announced that all viewers would be able to receive stereo using the new MTS system.

An interplay developed between home audio and video. Audio manufacturers began cautiously labelling some amplifier and receiver inputs "video," to encourage their use for video sound. Eventually, audio components acquired video inputs, outputs and switchers, to serve as the nuclei of true audio/video systems.

Video technology also revolutionized

home audio. A decade ago, digital sound recording was just migrating from the labs into commercial use via master tapes that could only be released as analog LPs and cassettes. Digital recordings could not be made or played, as such, in the home, because the system required as much information capacity, or bandwidth, as video. But "PCM converters" could be used to record sound digitally on VCRs.

About halfway through home video's first decade, the laser tracking technology developed for videodiscs was adapted for home audio use in the digital Compact Disc. Soon thereafter, videodiscs added digital sound to the high-fidelity stereo

sound system they had been born with. The discs used the same digital coding format as CDs, which led to last year's development of CD-Video Singles—a new A/V format in the CD's 4.7-inch original disc size. Perhaps as a result, the market for videodiscs is heating up, with new sources for both discs and players entering the market.

Audio CDs with limited-motion video are coming, too. They're already used in Japan for karaoke sing-along discs, with lyrics on the video graphics channel. Dubbed CD+Graphics, the format is headed here with lyrics, liner notes, guitar chords or just pictures accompanying the music.



Ivan Berger is Technical Editor of Audio Magazine and co-author of The New Sound of Stereo (Plume).

Another new laser format, CD-Interactive will enmesh audio and video still more. This format combines audio, video and computer data for instructional and other purposes.

Video is also responsible for partly reviving an old audio idea, surround sound. This sneaked in from the movie industry, which found it impossible (and undesirable) to remove Dolby Surround directional information from movies on cassette. While most Dolby Surround decoders are independent units made with videophiles in mind, many home audio components now include it, too.

It seems safe to predict that progress in audio and video will never again proceed along totally independent paths. But where will that progress lead? As a start, tomorrow's equipment will be more digitized. Instead of converting digital bits to a conventional analog signal in CD or CD-V players or in DAT recorders, home equipment will convert the signals as close to the loudspeakers as possible.

Someday the speakers themselves may accept digital pulses as input, but before that, the conversion will take place in amplifiers. The theoretical advantage is that digital signals pick up less noise, distortion and other problems than analog signals. The real advantage, however, may be greater ease in manipulating the signal, so we can shape it to our needs.

Yamaha already makes a preamp, the CX-1000, with a digital equalizer which, unlike analog equalizers or tone controls, leaves a signal's noise, distortion and phase response unchanged. Perhaps we'll also see digital restoration circuits that will clean up signals from old analog recordings, too. Independent pitch and tempo changes should be possible.

At the moment, the main limitation on music's dynamic range is set by our homes' high ambient noise levels. Circuits that analyze and cancel the noise already exist for flyers' headphones and may soon be built into cars. Circuits that do the same for home listening rooms are sure to follow. Perhaps similar systems, just outside our listening rooms, will let us play music as loud as we like without disturbing others.

Eventually, we may have digital sound gear that senses acoustical problems in our rooms, then changes the signal to compensate. We already have digital room-simulation circuits, which make musical selections sound as if they're being performed in whatever space we choose.

At the moment, in fact, the acoustic end of audio/video—our speakers and our rooms—are the weak links in home listening. Expect to have a great deal of attention paid to this, in improved speakers and in gadgets to absorb, diffuse and reflect sound as needed.

In the CD's early days, a Sony spokesman referred to it as "a recording medium for the 20th century." But the century has only another dozen years to run. So expect a replacement for the CD, possibly spurred by new recording media developed for high-definition TV. These media will probably be designed with enough data capacity to hold improved sound as well as better pictures.

Today's sophisticated audio and video

record/playback machinery, with its spinning discs and revolving head drums, will eventually seem crude, just because it is machinery. The ultimate recording medium will have no moving parts, like a computer memory chip. We're still some distance from that point, but it will come.

Video itself will be thoroughly transformed by then, even more so than audio. But then, it has more of a distance to go to catch up with audio's 100-year head start. ■

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Throughout 1988 consumers have been touted with such startling news as "the VCR has been reinvented." Truth is, improvements have been made, some of them so complicated to operate that you never get to use them if you are not a well-trained video technician.

However, there are some new VCR's on the market that offer features that you must consider when buying a new VCR: for example, Instant Replay's line of "Image Translator™ VCR's." These unique recorders have the ability to play and record not only American tapes but all other 16 World Standards.

In an age where global education and communication is more important than ever, being able to communicate internationally via video is a necessity for most people. You can swap audio tapes, computer messages, photo or film material around the world; you certainly don't want to be restricted to only watch what has been produced for this country when it comes to video.

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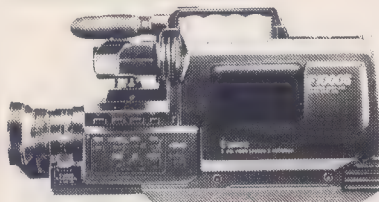
The inventors, Instant Replay in Florida have won several awards for their Image Translator VCR's.

For more information contact **Instant Replay** directly at 2951 S. Bayshore Drive, Miami, FL 33133. Phone (305) 448-7088 Fax (305) 445-1998.

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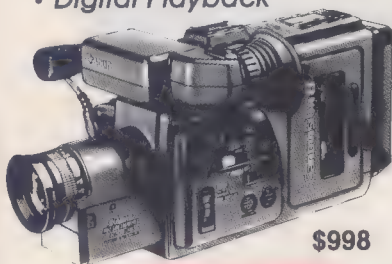
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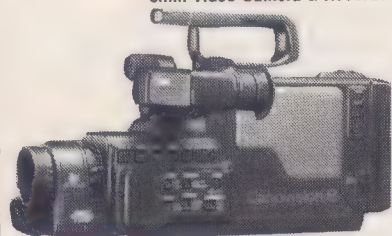
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STATE OF THE ART

Q & A

BY RODERICK WOODCOCK

Zoom at the top

Q I frequently tape sailboat races with my old RCA CC004 video camera. However, its 6x, 11.5 to 70 mm zoom lens cannot pick up the boats' sail numbers from my vantage point, usually about one to 1.5 miles away. Is there any way to increase my camera's telephoto range?

Bob Osborn
Los Angeles, Calif.

A The only camcorder to offer interchangeable lenses is Sony's ED-C55 ED Beta model, which offers great picture quality, but at a price (\$7,700) that's definitely not for amateurs. However, Panasonic makes a video camera that accepts interchangeable lenses and three other video cameras, now discontinued, also offer the feature. They are JVC's GX-N7 and Magnavox's VR8275 and VR8276.

The best thing about them is that they also accept lenses suitable for 35 mm still cameras from Pentax, Canon, Olympus, Minolta and Nikon. Hundreds of good lenses, telephoto and wide-angle, are available for these cameras. Although discontinued, you may still be able to find one of these cameras, especially at an industrial video store, of which there are many in the Los Angeles area.

Finally, don't overlook the numerous tele-extenders available for camcorders. Although you may experience some vignetting and a loss of sharpness, they can more than double your reach and are available from camera and accessory makers.

The unconverted

Q My cable company supplies me with a converter and a separate descrambler that goes between the converter and the TV. Recently, my converter went bad and

I tried to use my VCR as the channel selector, but the channels were scrambled. Apparently my VCR does not perform the same function as a converter. Are there any VCRs or audio/video receivers that do?

David Poole
Orange, Calif.

A Some converters used by cable companies work mechanically, while others are electronic. Still others combine a descrambler with the converter in one box. VCRs also offer a variety of tuner designs, ranging from the mechanical "turret" designs of several years ago to electronic models, some of which must be tuned manually while others come tuned to a specific range of frequencies. Whether a VCR is "cable-capable" depends not only on the frequency range of its tuners, but also on the frequencies the cable company is using to transmit its programming.

Some cable companies with older equipment rent converter boxes that can easily be replaced by VCRs or TVs with solid-state, frequency-synthesized tuners that can tune all frequencies. Since you have an add-on descrambler, it sounds like your cable company was forced to add this device to prevent signal piracy.

A good frequency-synthesized tuner, either stand-alone or in a VCR, should easily replace your converter. If your VCR is older, with a limited tuning range, this may not be the case. If it does work, however, using it as a replacement for the cable company's converter will let you select channels but not record them, since the descrambler comes after it in the signal path to the TV.

What's a monitor?

Q For a TV set to be called a monitor, does it have to have 420 or more lines of horizontal resolution? J.W. Walker
Orlando, Fla.

A There are no rules for defining a monitor; resolution has nothing to do with it. But a monitor should have separate audio and video inputs. These add flexibility when you're hooking up components, and, since the signals don't have to be modulated into a VHF signal for reception on channel 3 or 4, they yield better audio and video—hence better resolution.

Video Magazine welcomes your questions. Please include a phone number, but not a self-addressed envelope as the volume of mail does not permit personal replies. Letters may be edited for clarity and space. Address correspondence to Q & A, Video Magazine, 460 West 34 Street, New York, NY 10001.

Remote flashes

Q I have an X-Tra Link remote transmitter hooked up to my bedroom TV. With it, I can view tapes or videodiscs being played on equipment in the living room and still operate all the controls via the infrared remote and the X-Tra Link, which transmits the signals through a wire to the living room. Recently, though, I've noticed the infrared receiver of the X-Tra Link flashing intermittently even when there's no equipment running. Do you know what's causing this?

Frank Addison
San Diego, Calif.

A A spokesman at Xan-Tech, which makes the product, says your X-Tra Link may be responding to spurious radio-frequency emissions from other equipment in your house. It's even possible they could be coming in through your TV antenna, which is probably connected to the X-Tra Link through standard coaxial cable. However, the emissions do not damage either the X-Tra Link or other equipment.

Cable timeshifting

Q Is there any device that will allow me to make timeshifted recordings on my VCR from my cable system? My cable company provided me with an additional converter for the VCR so I can set and record one channel while watching another, but I cannot set the VCR to record programs from more than one channel while I'm away.

Robert Mannino
Columbus, Ohio

A As you've discovered, in most single-box scrambled cable hookups the cable box transmits its signal into the VCR on a fixed channel, usually 3 or 4.

TECH TIP

Gremlin busting

Electromagnetic interference can play havoc with the picture on a video camera or a camcorder, while mimicking the jagged lines a poor system connection also induces. To tell which is causing the problem, shake your cables one at a time. If the lines on the picture don't change, interference is probably the culprit. Verify this by turning in a circle with the camera while watching the viewfinder. Interference will cause the lines to weaken and strengthen as you turn.

In such a set-up, the VCR's own programmable tuner becomes useless. There is a solution to your problem if your converter box has a wireless remote control. JNEL (792 W. Main St., Mansfield, MA 02048) offers the CableMaster, an on-board programmable timer that can transmit signals to specific brands of cable converter/descrambler boxes (as well as many satellite receivers) and instruct them to change channels on command.

Since there are many different brands of cable boxes on the market, the CableMaster must be fitted with the appropriate "personality module" that is compatible with the infrared frequencies of the box. You also have to program the VCR and the CableMaster separately, although the VCR is always told to turn on to the same channel each time—the one that matches the output channel of the cable box. ■



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VIDEOTESTS



Holy Tera:

Tera's 629A monitor/receiver comes with built-in speakers and remote stereo headphones.

VIDEOTEST NUMBER 460

Tera 27-inch monitor/receiver

Tera is a new high-end Taiwanese company that is introducing two 27-inch monitor/receivers with a 29-inch to follow. The 27-inch 629A reviewed here differs from

the 629C only because of its built-in speakers. The sets are otherwise so close they even share the same manual.

The 629A has several state-of-the-art features that optimize picture quality, including switchable color and video noise reduction circuits, a color transient improvement circuit to reduce dot crawl, scanning velocity modulation for sharper edges, black level extension for better blacks and a non-linear compression circuit

to better render the luminance range, as well as all the latest picture enhancements.

Great attention is given to audio performance. The Tera's amplifiers are conservatively rated at 25 watts per channel and are fed by a separate power supply to minimize interaction between the video and audio circuitry. The two-way speaker systems have passive drivers in addition to woofers so that they will reproduce frequencies in the low 50 Hertz region. The

Tera 629A 27-Inch Monitor/Receiver

DATA

Suggested Price:
\$1,950

Weight:
139 pounds

Dimensions (h/w/d):
25-3/8 x 37-1/4 x
19-1/4 inches

Power Requirements:
115 VAC, 60 Hz

Power Consumption:
250 W

Screen Size:
27 inches, measured
diagonally

Speaker Size:
2-inch tweeter, 5-1/4-
inch woofer and 5-1/4-
inch passive driver for
each channel

Type of Tuning:
frequency synthesis

Method of Tuning:
programmable scan on
set, direct access plus
scan on remote control

MTS/SAP:
yes

**Broadcast Tuning
Range:**
2 to 13, 14 to 83

Cable Tuning Range:
2 to 13, A to I, J to W,
A-1 to A-5

Remote Control:
IR wireless with buttons
for power, speaker on/
off, headphone on/off,
muting, channel up,
channel down, volume
up, volume down, CNR
(color noise reduction),

CATV/TV, MTS, TV/V1/
V2/V3, ant./aux., sleep,
display, revert (last
channel recall), reset
and select; rockers for
picture +/-, level (se-
lected picture or sound
quality) +/-; and two
headphone jacks

**Video/Stereo Audio
Inputs:**
3—2 on rear panel, one
on front panel

S-Video Input:
1, paralleled with video
1 input

RGB input:
9-pin connector with
auto polarity

**Video/Stereo Audio
Output:**
2—rear panel, 1 fixed
and 1 variable audio
level

**Video/Stereo Audio
Tuner Output:**
1—front panel

**Auxiliary Stereo
Audio Output:**
no

Headphone Jack:
2 on remote control

**External Speaker
Connectors:**
no

**Internal Audio
Amplifier Power:**
25 watts per channel
into 8 ohms with
0.5% THD

Accessories:
remote control and
headphones

RESULTS

Horiz. Resoultion:
rated—400 lines;
measured—410 lines

enclosures for each channel's speaker system were designed to hi-fi standards and unitized with the picture tube cabinet.

Description. The 629A looks somewhat like a scaled-down console model because of the unitized speaker enclosures. They occupy about 10-1/2 inches of the total width. Also emphasizing this appearance is the wood top panel, which is painted black like the wood sides. They blend easily with the large black bezel and the blackened aluminum panel across the bottom, which is interrupted only by a small control and display area.

In that group are a channel up/down rocker, a volume rocker and buttons for antenna/auxiliary, TV/video 1/video 2/video 3 and power. The display has LED indicators for RGB, stereo, SAP, TV, antenna, auxiliary, video 1, video 2 and video 3. The pedestal has two windows that transmit the stereo sound via infrared beams back to the remote control and the two pairs of headphones it can power. The right can be angled for better reception by the remote. One pair of stereophones is supplied with the set.

Concealed beneath a black metal flap are the remaining front panel controls. At the left of the compartment are the master power switch, jacks for video 3 input and tuner output and a vertical hold knob. In the center are buttons for picture + and -, color noise reduction, MTS, display, select, +, - and reset.

The select button cycles through black level, detail, color, tint, bass, treble and balance. The selected parameter appears as a bar scale and the current setting is

continued on page 89

VIDEOTEST NUMBER 461

Canon 8mm camcorder

At long last there is a camcorder, the Canon E708, with an infrared remote control. That palm-sized device operates not only the standard recorder functions but also the camera's zoom and start/stop as well. Combine this capability with a remote-controlled mount and you can shoot from positions that would be uncomfortable otherwise. You can now also control two cameras at once, although you'll still have to run a wire to monitor exactly what the camera is seeing.

On a more basic level, the average user can play tapes on this camcorder with all the ease of playing them on a remote-controlled table model VCR. The E708 also uses digital circuitry for improved still frame and 1/3x slow motion as well as three levels of art and six levels of strobe effects. That's a lot of features to pack into a really light camcorder.

Description. The E708 looks like any other compact camcorder except that a small part of the viewfinder has a textured, transparent red cap that covers the infrared sensor and the tally lamp. The viewfinder assembly pivots atop the camera area and can swing to either side and flip over for right- or left-eyed viewing. A switch inverts the image so that it is right side up in either position. The magnifier in the hood can be focused and the hood can be flipped up for viewing from a distance.

Near the rear edge of the left side of the camcorder are the battery release and the buttons for mode, shift, + and -, as well as buttons for composing a title with up to two lines of 16 characters each. Only one set of titles may be memorized at a time and titles can only be changed in the camera record/pause mode.

Farther forward are two rows of camera controls. In the top row are buttons for one-shot autofocus in manual focus mode, fade, review, title imprint, date imprint, counter reset and a switch that determines whether a fade will be to white or to black. The second row has switches for auto/manual focus, sepia, average/center-weighted metering, two shutter speeds, a manual/program camera mode selector and a button for white balance lock.

If program mode is selected, focus and white balance are automatic, sepia and the high-speed shutter are turned off and metering is average. A compartment houses RCA-type pin jacks for audio and video in/out and a mini jack that supplies power to the RF adapter, which plugs into all three jacks at the same time.

The zoom lever on the lens has a release to enter macro mode. In manual mode you may focus by turning the front of

continued on page 94



Wireless Wizardry: Canon's E708 has an infrared remote control.

Snowiness: S/N, Luminance:

57.1 dB

Chroma AM S/N:

64.4 dB

Chroma PM S/N:

64.5 dB

Accuracy of Colors:

excellent at factory

preset

Audio Frequency

Response:

20 Hz-20 kHz, +0.3/

-1.1 dB at line output

Audio S/N:

78 dB from terminated

audio 1 input

Total Harmonic

Distortion:

0.4%

RATINGS

Picture Quality:

excellent

Audio Performance:

excellent for built-in

speakers

Operational Ease:

excellent

Overall Performance:

excellent

VIDEOTESTS

VIDEOTEST NUMBER 462

Pioneer 45-inch projection TV

Pioneer's SD-P452 is the first of its new line of 45-inch rear projection monitor/receivers, and it benefits from a series of improvements included in all of Pioneer's TVs this year. It is rated at 650 lines of horizontal resolution and 350 footlamberts of screen brightness. A new double-sided lenticular screen improves the contrast ratio, and the vertical viewing angle is almost doubled so that the change in brightness a viewer perceives when moving from a sitting to a standing position (three meters from the set) is almost imperceptible.

Dynamic Picture Control improves contrast, Dynamic Contour Control creates more natural edges within the picture and Dynamic Focusing improves edge sharpness without "blooming." Dynamic Black Level Expansion improves picture gradation in dark areas and Dynamic Picture Optimizer (DPO) modifies color, brightness and contrast depending on ambient light.

The SD-P452 offers a Dolby Surround Sound decoder with digital delay. The internal 10-watt-per-channel amplifier may be used to power external front or rear



Sharper and Brighter: Pioneer's SD-P452 projection TV boasts 650 lines of horizontal resolution and 350 footlamberts of brightness.

speakers but not both at the same time. The monitor accepts up to three audio/video sources and an S-video connector serves as an alternate source for video 1.

Both tuner out and monitor out (with-

out video 2) are provided. A system out connector transmits remote commands to other Pioneer equipment bearing the SR logo. The supplied remote is programmed

continued on page 104

Pioneer SD-P452 45-inch Projection TV

DATA

Suggested Price:
\$3,850

Weight:
196.3 pounds

Dimensions (h/w/d):
50-1/4 x 42-1/8 x
25-3/4 inches

Power Requirements:
120 VAC, 60 Hz

Power Consumption:
275 W

Screen Size:
45 inches

Speaker Size:
one 6-inch speaker for
each channel

Type of Tuning:
frequency synthesis

Method of Tuning:
programmable scan on
set; scan plus direct
access on remote

MTS/SAP:
yes

**Broadcast Tuning
Range:**
2 to 13, 14 to 69

Cable Tuning Range:
70 channels—2 to 13
A-6 to A-1, A to I, J to
W, AA to ZZ, AAA to
CCC

Remote Control:
IR wireless with switches
for SR recall/use/learn
and VDP/VCR/aux; but-
tons for TV power, VDP
power, VCR power, aux
power, TV in, VDP in,

video 1 in, video 2 in,
sleep, pause/still, stop/
eject, play, record (2
buttons), mute, surround
mode, surround volume
+ and -, MTS, channel
return, antenna 1/2, dis-
play, standard A/V mem-
ory, picture/sound se-
lect, memory clear and
reset, a 10-digit keypad
and 2 unassigned keys;
and rockers for VCR
channel, TV channel,
fast forward/rewind
(search), master volume
and picture sound adjust

**Video/Stereo Audio
Inputs:**
3—VDP, video 1, video
2 (duplicate jacks on
front panel)

S-Video Input:
1—parallel with video 1

**Video/Stereo Audio
Output:**

1—monitor/record, any
selected input except
video 2

**Video/Stereo Audio
Tuner Output:** 1

**Auxiliary Stereo
Audio Output:**
surround with balance
control on rear

Headphone Jack: no

**External Speaker
Connectors:**
yes, with internal/exter-
nal switch

**Internal Audio Ampli-
fier Power:**
10 watts/channel

Accessories:
programmable remote
control and 2 AA cells

RESULTS

Horiz. Resolution:
rated and meas-
ured—650 lines

**Snowiness; S/N,
Luminance:**
56.1 dB

Chroma AM S/N:
63.3 dB

Chroma PM S/N:
62.7 dB

Screen Brightness:
rated—350 footlamberts;
measured—350+ foot-
lamberts

Accuracy of Colors:
excellent at factory
preset

**Audio Frequency
Response:**
rated and measured—50

Hz-15 kHz (-3 dB at
speaker terminals);
measured—20 Hz-20
kHz, +0.8/-1.7 dB,
VDP in to monitor out
terminals

Audio S/N:
71 dB, video 1 selected

**Total Harmonic
Distortion:**
0.8%

RATINGS

Picture Quality:
excellent

Audio Performance:
very good

Operational Ease:
excellent

Overall Performance:
excellent

VIDEOTEST NUMBER 463

Panasonic VHS camcorder with image stabilization

A hand-held camcorder shows every motion the operator makes and magnifies it on telephoto shots. The Panasonic PV-460 with Electronic Image Stabilization (EIS) eliminates such movement. It uses horizontal and vertical motion sensors and linear motors to move the lens in the opposite direction of the camera movement, compensating for about 80 percent of operator movement.

Since some movement, like panning, is intentional, the EIS may be switched to compensate only for vertical motion or switched off entirely when you want to shoot from a tripod. There is also an EIS lock button that should be held down if you must swing the camera quickly while the EIS mechanism is on. In short, EIS can eliminate or reduce most of the amateurish camera movement that gives home videos the reputation for causing motion sickness.

The PV-460 also offers a 10x, two-speed power zoom lens, autofocus with a switchable point focus zone, auto iris with backlight control and auto white balance for indoor or outdoor shooting. It also has auto fade, index and address marking, date/time imprinting, record review, a flying erase head, an edit switch, audio dub, video dub and a macro mode that lets you shoot subjects as close as one inch from the lens. It offers a full range of VCR controls as well as a wired run/pause remote.

Description. The lens of the PV-460 is enclosed in a streamlined cowl with a glass front. Protruding from the left of the cowl is a large manual focus knob and buttons for backlight control, auto fade and the EIS lock. Further back are controls for auto/manual white balance, autofocus, the focal zone, shutter speed, the macro range and the EIS.

Along the bottom left are buttons for record review, manual index marking, counter/display/memory/elapsed time,



Steady Shooter: Panasonic's PV-460 VHS camcorder reduces jitter in camcorder pictures.

counter reset, date/time and the clock. The viewfinder swivels forward for storage or projects over the left side for shooting. It slides sideways for comfortable viewing with either eye and swings up or down for high- or low-angle shots.

On top of the recorder are the power slider and buttons for standby and eject. A gray, translucent slider functions as the camera/line switch. When it is open all the line recording and playback controls are exposed. Also on top are a handle, an accessory shoe, a microphone and a jack for an external mic.

The hand grip on the right side has a safety strap. The run/pause button and zoom rocker rest under your fingers. Light pressure on the rocker gives a slow zoom while greater pressure makes it zoom faster. The remainder of the right side is occupied by the cassette hatch.

The rear has a slot for the battery, which runs the camcorder for about 100 minutes and recharges in 110 minutes. Above the slot are a battery release and a multi-pin jack for the AC adapter. To the side are jacks for the wired remote and an earphone, the edit switch and buttons for tracking. On the bottom are the clock battery compartment, a non-slip shoulder pad, a tripod socket and a notch for storing the lens cap.

Operation. Using the PV-460 is very easy. Turn on the power, swing the viewfinder into position, set all of the functions to automatic, insert a cassette, switch EIS to the appropriate position, make sure the camera/line slider covers the line controls and press the run/pause trigger. If the situation warrants, you may select manual focus, fixed white balance, backlight, fade or any of the other options.

For line recording or playback the camera/line slider should be in the line position and line sources must be plugged into the camcorder through the AC adapter. You may record from a TV with an audio/video output, a VCR or another camcorder. For playback you may watch the picture in the viewfinder or on a monitor connected through the A/V out adapter or the AC adapter.

Performance. The recorder section of the PV-460 delivers 240 lines of horizontal resolution even though the camera section can deliver 300 lines. Its unweighted video signal-to-noise ratio is 43.7 decibels. The weighted video S/N is 51.4 dB, while chroma AM S/N is 42.2 dB and chroma PM S/N is 42.3 dB. Ordinarily these ratings are very good for a standard VHS camcorder. Video dubs are nearly seamless and free from moire thanks to a flying erase head.

continued on page 106

BY IVAN BERGER

THE NEW SOUND OF VIDEO



Receivers, amps, decoders hit new levels of sophistication.

Having a big screen alone isn't enough to approximate the experience of seeing a movie in a theater. Action movies like *RoboCop* overwhelm audiences not just with nifty special effects but with powerful audio as well. If you've seen a movie in a theater with huge speakers and Dolby stereo, playing it through the dinky speakers found on most TVs just doesn't have the same impact. To approximate the theater-going experience you not only need good speakers (see "Bustin' Loose," this issue) but an amplifier or receiver capable of decoding the surround sound or digital audio signals available from today's videotapes and discs.

Ivan Berger is Technical Editor of Audio Magazine and co-author of The New Sound of Stereo (Plume).

Audio manufacturers are becoming much more aware of the demand for components that enhance video viewing. Audio/video receivers and amps now offer more video inputs and can be wired to control all the components in an A/V system. And as surround sound's popularity grows, manufacturers are not only introducing more decoders, they're inventing new kinds of surround sound that simulate different environments. For videophiles who want to create the ultimate viewing environment, A/V amplifiers, receivers and surround decoders are absolute essentials.

One of the most versatile of the new audio/video receivers is Onkyo's TX-SV7M, an update of last year's TX-RV47 ("The New Breed," Mar. '88). The older model, which sold for just under \$500, had

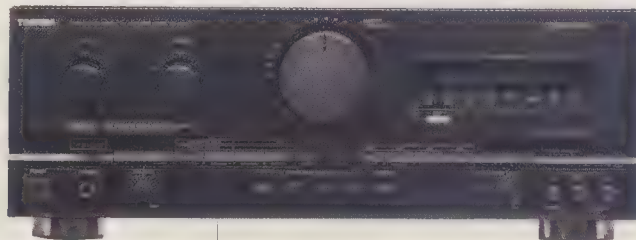
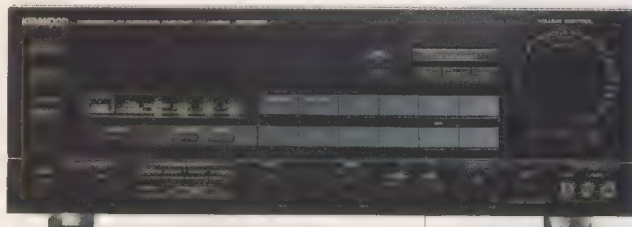
video connections, matrix surround sound, an amplifier that developed 55 watts per channel and a remote control that could also operate other Onkyo sound components.

The TX-SV7M, for \$1,000, is a more serious machine. Its surround sound circuits include not only matrix but true Dolby surround (without center-channel or subwoofer outputs, however) and a "concert-hall" simulator, with a variable rear-channel delay for greater realism in the Dolby and hall modes. Its tuner picks up not only FM and AM but also VHF television channels 2 through 13, with decoders for MTS stereo and SAP.

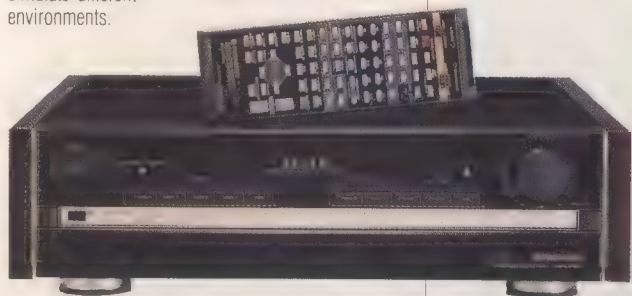
Its amplifier feeds 90 watts per channel to the front speakers and 20 watts per channel to the surround ones. And the remote control offers surround mode switch-



Logical Thinking: Pioneer's VSX-9300 receiver uses Dolby Pro Logic circuitry for more accurate sound placement in the surround field.



Solid Surround:
Kenwood's KA-V1000R receiver (above left) and Toshiba's XB-1000 (above right) offer surround modes that simulate different environments.



Making Connections:
Pioneer's C-91 amplifier offers five audio inputs and five audio/video inputs.



Sonic Boom:
Toshiba's latest monitor/receivers feature Carver's Sonic Holography stereo enhancement circuitry.

NEW SOUND

A Viewer's Guide To Audio For Video

Audio-for-video is no longer a sonic backwater. The following is a guide to audio features you are likely to encounter in setting up a video system sophisticated enough to please demanding listeners.

Digital-to-analog converter. A circuit that changes digital pulses to analog signals prior to their transformation into sounds and picture.

Digital hall simulation. A system designed to mimic the acoustic properties of specific performance spaces that relies on speakers to control directionality and computer circuits to alter and delay the signals each speaker reproduces. This lets living rooms sound like a variety of other spaces.

Direct digital input. A jack that accepts digital pulses directly from a component without mediation by a digital-to-analog converter.

Dolby noise reduction. A family of noise-reduction systems from Dolby Laboratories. In Dolby B NR, high frequencies, which are too weak to mask tape hiss, are boosted during recording, then cut back an equal amount during playback, increasing the signal-to-noise ratio by up to 10 decibels. Dolby C NR goes farther for a stronger effect on midrange frequencies. Dolby A NR, used in professional recording, works on several frequency bands at once.

Equalizer. A set of tone controls—usually five, seven or 10—each of which affects a relatively small portion of the frequency range, which is about 10 octaves wide.

HX Pro. A system that increases the dynamic range of tape recordings by allowing stronger high-frequency signals to be recorded without distortion.

Logic steering. A circuit that compares the signals going to the channels of a surround sound system so as to reduce the output of channels that would receive unwanted signals.

Low impedance speakers. Speakers that demand relatively more current and less voltage than normal for a given power level.

Matrix. In surround sound, a recording system for mixing three or more signals into two channels in a way that permits the original signals to be retrieved independently. Matrix circuits can also distribute sound among several speakers during playback.

Pulse code modulation (PCM). A system of digital audio encoding that takes samples thousands of times per second, recording each sample as a digital number of pre-determined length, such as 16 bits.

Sonic holography. A circuit by Carver Corporation that broadens the stereo field so it seems to extend beyond the speakers. The effect is to sharpen a listener's sense of where a sound appears to originate.

Speaker shielding. Protection against a speaker's magnetic field leaking out with sufficient strength to distort the image from a nearby color picture tube.

Surround sound. A system using several speakers, each receiving different signals, to make listeners feel they are within the sound field rather than on its edge. —IB

ing and front/rear balance buttons, plus 21 buttons you can program to control the most important functions of your video gear. More important, though, Onkyo's new receiver sounds better than its predecessor.

YOU'RE SURROUNDED

True Dolby surround sound has become a more common feature on new A/V amps and receivers. Pioneer's VSX-9300 even has Pro Logic steering for more accurate sound placement in the surround field. Most of the new models also offer non-Dolby surround circuitry to add ambience to stereo music. Such models as Technics' SA-R530 receiver, Toshiba's XB-1000 amplifier and a new model coming soon from JVC have digital surround circuitry that can simulate specific spaces like concert halls, jazz clubs, stadiums or cathedrals.

Yamaha's DSP-3000 goes a bit beyond the Dolby surround standard, processing the rear channels in stereo instead of mono and switching out Dolby's rear-channel frequency-range limitations. (The Lexicon CP-1 also has stereo rear-channel processing, while both the NEC PLD-310 and the Technics SH-AV40 decoders have full-bandwidth rear channels.)

The 3000 uses digital circuitry for its Dolby and delay effects as well as to simulate the acoustics of different performing spaces. Digital delay circuitry is also used on surround processors from NEC, Sony and SSI and in the Dolby Surround circuits on the Lexicon CP-1 and Sony SDP-777ES.

The 3000 also boasts direct digital inputs that accept undecoded audio signals from compact disc players, while a built-in digital-to-analog converter decodes the signals for the rest of the system. This avoids minor errors that might creep into the signal when the CD player turns it into analog and the receiver turns it back into digital again.

The DSP-3000's remote control lets you balance the sound from your listening seat, rather than making you adjust by guessing, sitting down to listen, then hopping back to reset the controls. About the only common surround-processor feature the DSP-3000 lacks is logic circuitry to control directionality in Dolby Surround mode—and you can hook in another Yamaha box, the DSR-100PRO, to provide that.

Dolby's Pro Logic and other surround-logic systems are available in various models from Aphex, Fosgate, Lexicon, NEC, Proton, Sony, Surround Sound Inc. and Syn-ergex, among others.

How do you put surround speakers in your living room without turning it into a spaghetti dish of wires? Koss offers speakers that receive signals through the air on infrared beams and Recoton has speakers that pick up signals through the house wiring (also handy for listening in other rooms). Surround Sound Inc. has speakers that hang from ceiling track lights, and a rapidly growing number of companies (including ADS, Bose, KEF and Sonance) make speakers designed to be mounted in your walls.

The designers of recent audio/video amps and receivers have taken care with sonic details. For example, both Philips and Sony boast that some of their receivers can deliver high-signal currents into low-impedance speakers, broadening the range of speakers with which they will sound best. The cabinets of the Pioneer C-90 A/V preamp and Sony's A/V preamp and receivers are designed to damp external vibrations, even though their solid-state circuits are relatively immune to such effects. A number of integrated amplifiers and a few receivers have "Source Direct" switches that can bypass tone controls and other circuits, to keep the sound just a bit purer than it would be without bypassing.

Yamaha's CX-800U preamp has phono-input load adjustments on its front panel, to provide the best possible signal match for any phono cartridge. It also has a phase-inversion switch, to ensure that the sound emerges from the speakers in step with the sound that originally reached the microphones (at least on recordings on which the phasing isn't messed up beyond repair). The difference such features make is subtle, like the buttonhole detailing on a custom-made suit, but the fact that manufacturers are going to the trouble shows how seriously they're taking the audio/video consumer.

TOTAL CONTROL

The latest A/V components are designed to be easier to use. Programmable remotes that can be used with other manu-

continued on page 122



Surround Sound That Will Leave You Speechless

Two years ago Shure Brothers, Inc. announced the HTS 5000 that revolutionized consumer-level decoding of Dolby Surround Sound with steering logic and derived-stereo surround channels. The improved HTS 5200 appeared last year and now Shure is releasing a complete system, the HTS Theater Reference System for \$9,600, based on the same principles. It consists of the HTS 5300 Acra-Vector logic decoder with remote control, for \$1,250; three HTS50SPA signal processing amplifiers, for \$1,650 each; a HTS50CF center-front loudspeaker (\$750), four HTS50LRS left/right/surround loudspeakers, for \$500 each; and a HTS50SW subwoofer, for \$650. The components may be purchased separately and an optional HTS50RX remote extender is available for \$99.

Developed with the cooperation of leading motion picture producers and engineers, the system is designed to recreate motion picture sound exactly as intended by film studios. Cinema sound does not have flat frequency response throughout the entire hearing range, but only between 100 and 2,000 Hertz. Below and above the sound is rolled off to be -6 decibels at 50 Hz and -14 dB at 10 kilohertz in accordance with International Standard ISO 2969.

The HTS 5300 decoder develops front left, center, right, rear (surround) left and right, and subwoofer channels by keeping the signal path simple and putting the bulk of its directional enhancement, or steering logic, in intelligent sub-chains. The directional enhancement removes crosstalk between channels.

Identical HTS50LRS speakers are used for front and rear and right and left speakers. They are smaller than traditional full-range systems, leaving the low-frequency sound to be reproduced by the HTS50SW subwoofer. The HTS50CF center front speaker with the all-important task of reproducing most of the dialogue is larger than the side speakers and should be placed above the screen.

The HTS50PA amplifiers deliver 100 watts per channel RMS into 4 ohms. Each channel has a volume control for level matching and an operational mode switch to match frequency response to the type of speaker it is driving.

The Theater Reference System recreates the theatrical experience with near perfection in a home setting. It requires some attention to speaker placement and the room should not be too dead. Otherwise, it is instant theater sound right out of the box.

—Lancelot Braithwaite

Shure Thing:

The HTS Theater Reference surround sound system includes an array of specialized speakers, a signal processing amplifier, the Acra Vector logic decoder with wireless remote, and an optional remote extender.



BY MARK FLEISCHMANN

BUSTIN' LOOSE

Built-in amplifiers, wireless remotes and magnetic shields free video speakers from traditional bounds.

You've brought home the monitor/receiver you've dreamed about. The wiring is in place, and Luciano Pavarotti is first on the program. The lights dim and the great tenor strides onstage. A hush falls over the audience. He opens his mouth as the audience braces itself for sonorous tones, and out comes—a metallic squeak. Like a mouse.

Has the cat got Pavarotti's tongue? Is there a glitch in the videodisc? Nope. It's your speakers. Premium video demands premium audio, and your system doesn't have it.

Even today, the speakers packaged with top TVs leave a lot to be desired. Big-screen models have more room in their large enclosures for *good-sized* speakers, but that doesn't guarantee they'll be *good* ones. In fact, it's next to impossible to design really high-quality speakers and powerful amplifiers into a 25-inch tube TV.

If you want the best, you must fend for yourself. Video-oriented audiophiles got used to this idea years ago when, as the cliché goes, they "married" their video and audio systems. But two boxy speakers flanking a modest screen remind me of a shotgun wedding. And speakers not shielded for use near a tube can't be moved close to the set. The result: wide sound, narrow picture. Incongruity. Frustration.

Luckily, the video loudspeaker market has matured. Today's video speakers—some rather exotically designed—meet a variety of needs. Whether your problem is amplification, wiring or shielding, a solution is available.

The new video speakers fall into three categories: powered, cordless and miscellaneous—a group that includes compact shielded speakers that lend themselves to video use without unduly sacrificing audio

quality. Each category is designed for a different kind of videophile. Let's explore.

FEEL THE POWER

Powered speakers, once a rarity, are now as common as platitudes on a politician's tongue. A powered speaker is essentially any speaker with a built-in amplifier. In a typical audio system, speakers are powered either by a separate amplifier or an amplifier built into an AM/FM receiver. In a typical TV, a small amplifier powers a tinny-sounding speaker. Why, then, would anyone want an amplified speaker when other amplifiers can be used?

The answer has to do with wiring. The main advantage—the beauty, really—of a powered speaker is that it can plug into the audio outputs of any audio/video component, even one without an amplifier. If your video system consists of a VCR plugged into a TV, just plug a pair of powered speakers into the VCR and you're in business. (Powered speakers also make for elegantly simple audio systems. Plug a pair into a CD player, a cassette deck or a Walkman and you're ready to roll.)

Powered speakers also take the nightmare out of surround-sound wiring. A surround system can have up to seven channels: front-left, front-center, front-right, rear-left, rear-center (as on the Apex ESP-7000 surround sound decoder), rear-right and subwoofer. Such a system would need at least four stereo amplifiers. But each pair of powered speakers eliminates one amplifier. And, yes, there are also powered subwoofers.

Of course, you needn't go all the way. If you have one good stereo amplifier, you can use it for front-left and front-right channels. Then, in a no-frills four-channel surround sound system, you'd need only one



Wireless Wonders:
Recoton's Wireless 100 speakers receive audio signals through ordinary household current.

Fearsome Foursome:
Speakers unusually well-suited to video listening include (top to bottom) Acoustic Research's triangular Powered Partners, Pioneer's shielded CS-910s, Bose's AM-5 satellite system and Yamaha's powered NS-W2 subwoofer.

VITTORIO SARTOR

BUSTIN' LOOSE

pair of powered speakers to handle the two rear channels.

Acoustic Research makes two powered speakers, including the Powered Partners, for \$380 a pair. Each two-way speaker has a 15-watt amp and a unique triangular shape. AR's other powered speaker is the unshielded TSW 115P (\$400 a pair), a two-way model with a 16-watt amp. Bose makes a shielded version of its ground-breaking RoomMates called (what else?) the Video RoomMates, for \$279 a pair.

Powered speakers are available from other manufacturers as well, including Ambico, Fisher, Koss, Proton, Quasar, Recoton and Sony. Sony's newest powered model is the 30-watt SRS-200, at \$300 a pair. Most powered speakers are shielded and have volume controls. Some also have tone controls. A year ago powered subwoofers were real rarities. Although they're still exotic, you can now choose among NEC's 60-watt SW-300B, for \$299; Sony's 30-watt SRS-B505, for \$200; and Yamaha's 40-watt NS-W2, for \$249.

The most exotic video speakers are the cordless variety—speakers you can hang

Cordless speakers receive signals from remote infrared transmitters.

on a wall or perch on bookshelves with no unsightly cables trailing behind them. Only two wildly divergent models, from Koss and Recoton, are available. They're both shielded for video use, but you'll have to decide for yourself whether they're right for *your* system.

The Koss JCK/5000 Kordlesspeaker System, for \$350 a pair, achieves "kordlessness" by using an infrared method similar to that which enables a wireless remote control to talk to a VCR. A paperback-sized infrared transmitter plugs into the headphone jack of an audio amp or a monitor/receiver. It sends audio signals to the speakers, which must be located within the line of sight.

The transmitter must be plugged into household current. The speakers, however, can function with D cells, rechargeable nickel cadmium batteries (a charger is included) or 12-volt AC adapters. Using the AC adapter defeats the cordless concept, but it's nice to know the option is there. Each speaker has a single tone control, a volume control and an on/off/charge switch. Aiming the transmitter at the speakers to boost signal strength is easy, although this may depend on the arrange-

ment of your furniture and the other components in your system.

The Kordlesspeakers' main drawback is a murmur reminiscent of weak FM reception, which is not surprising in an infrared device. The noise level remains constant even when the headphone jack's volume is reduced at the source. The Kosses are also prone to infrared interference, especially from remote controls, which can be a problem in a video speaker. In my informal test, a Sony VCR remote sounded like an office phone ringing. An RCA remote conjured up a sound like machine-gun fire. A Sanyo remote reminded me of helicopter blades whirring, and a Zenith remote generated slow blips, like a *Close Encounters* special effect.

Still, this is a unique product and, applied to speakers, a new technology. Koss deserves credit for bringing out the first truly cordless speaker system. (Koss also offers four shielded speakers, with cords, ranging from \$135 to \$260 a pair.)

Recoton takes a different approach in its Wireless 100 Stereo Speaker System, for \$270 a pair. The Recoton transmitter sends audio signals not through the air but through household current. On the receiving end is a pair of single-driver speakers. The right speaker contains a single amplifier, which powers both speakers, an on/off switch and a volume control. It transmits left-channel information to the left speaker through an umbilical cord of speaker wire. The AC cord connected to the right-hand speaker carries both the power and the signal, so it must be plugged in for the system to work.

The Recoton system is less noisy than the Koss, although transient noises from refrigerators and other appliances sharing the same power supply inevitably intrude. The single-driver speakers sound slightly metallic but pleasing. Bass response is considerable for a four-inch driver. A wider-range, two-way system is currently being developed.

Because the power and umbilical cords are indispensable, the Recotons are not truly cordless, the "wireless" moniker notwithstanding. However, even this compromised system eliminates the need to tear into carpets, walls and moldings to install speaker wire.

The Wireless 100s have one more eccentricity: they transmit sound not only to



Cord Cutters: Koss' JCK/5000 Kordlesspeakers, for \$350 a pair, receive signals through a remote transmitter.



Before you buy a TV, look around.

Toshiba's new 27" color TV is designed from an unusual point of view. All of them. No matter how you look at it, it's an unbelievably advanced TV. It has a five-speaker stereo sound system with a sub-woofer and Carver Sonic Holography®, for sound that puts you right in the middle of the action. 520 lines of horizontal resolution. Super VHS, dual RF and full A/V connections. Full on-screen displays. 181-channel cable compatibility. Toshiba's FST® tube. And to back it up, a 30-month limited warranty, one of the longest in the business.

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TOSHIBA

Toshiba America, Inc., 82 Totowa Road, Wayne, NJ 07470

the speakers, but to any AM radio that uses its AC cord as an antenna. The interference covers nearly the entire AM spectrum between stations, though FM seems to be unaffected. Also, if by some twist of fate you happen to be using the Recoton and Koss systems simultaneously, the Recotons will transmit a strangled signal to the Kosses.

Because of their peculiarities, neither the Koss nor the Recoton speakers would satisfy a fussy audiophile. But if you think one of these systems would solve your audio problems, they're worth auditioning if your dealer offers a money-back guarantee.

SHIELDED AND BEYOND

You needn't look far for shielded speakers. Well-known speaker makers such as Boston Acoustics and Polk offer them; so do mass-market suppliers like Fisher, NEC, Pioneer, Quasar, RCA, Sony and Technics. The speakers range from the modest Quasar SW30 (\$50/pair), with a single four-inch driver suitable for undemanding rear-channel applications, to Pioneer's three-way CS-910 (\$1,000/pair), a heavy-duty affair with a 12-inch woofer.

Among the most interesting are a handful of unusual systems with subwoofers—those low-frequency drivers dedicated to producing thumping bass—especially the

Zenith & Toshiba offer big-screen TVs with souped-up speakers.

Cambridge Soundworks Ensemble, designed by the legendary Henry Kloss.

Kloss came up with several acknowledged classics in speaker design, bearing the nameplates of KLH and Acoustic Research, before he went into big-screen TV with the Kloss Novabeam. Now he's back in the speaker business with Ensemble, for \$499, which coordinates two trim subwoofers (12 by 21 by 4.5 inches) with a pair of dainty "satellites" (1.5 by 8 by 4 inches). The system is available only by mail order from Cambridge Soundworks (617-332-9461).

Ironically, Kloss originally intended Ensemble to be a shielded video speaker system but later dispensed with the shielding. Why? "Henry didn't want it to be typecast as a video speaker," said partner Tom DeVest.

And when Henry Kloss thinks video, he thinks big-screen TV. In a big-screen system speakers needn't crowd the screen

to maintain a congruent soundstage. Tube viewers interested in Ensemble may be relieved to hear that the unshielded satellites are tiny enough to hang easily on the wall above and behind the screen, out of picture-impairment range.

Ensemble consumes between 25 and 100 watts. Running it with my own 60-watt amplifier, I heard crisp detailed highs with hardly a hint of the harshness that often results in ear-shredding "tweeter fatigue." The lows from the acoustic-suspension subwoofers were tightly controlled but fulfilling—no booming here. My only gripe was a slight lack of midrange, the area where the human voice resides, though midrange sound can be boosted by aiming the satellites at odd angles to disperse the high frequencies.

I lived with the Ensemble speakers for a week and fed them with a variety of movies, music videos and CDs. Ensemble excels with older recordings, though it can be unforgiving of those designed to deliver maximum tweeter attack through cheap speakers.

Ensemble may become the major competitor of another revolutionary subwoofer-and-satellite system, the Bose AM-5 Acoustimass, for \$699. Bose uses a single subwoofer unit with paired six-inch, low-frequency drivers. Highs go through 2.5-inch magnetically-shielded tweeters arranged in paired cubes.

The AM-5 has a warmer but less accurate sound than Ensemble—bass is discernably more boomy. Viewers committed to the tube may find the magnetic shielding a conclusive plus.

For the past six months I've been living with a perverse subwoofer-based system that unites the shielded JBL Pro III (\$265/pair) with Yamaha's powered NS-W2 subwoofer. The components weren't designed to work together, but it's been a successful marriage. The four-inch woofers of the compact JBLs can't generate enough satisfying bass on their own, but the Yamaha neatly fills out the bottom end. And the JBLs have the warmest sound I've ever heard.

Both the Yamaha and the JBLs are shielded, so they cozy up to my Proton monitor without turning *Psycho* into a psychedelic spectacle of chroma distortion. Because the Yamaha is a powered subwoofer, my amplifier has no extra duties. In all, it's a very satisfactory system, however bizarre it may seem by strict audiophile standards.

HEARD BUT NOT SEEN

For those who insist on using the speakers in their monitors, two video manufacturers working with audio manufacturers have made great strides in improv-

continued on page 122



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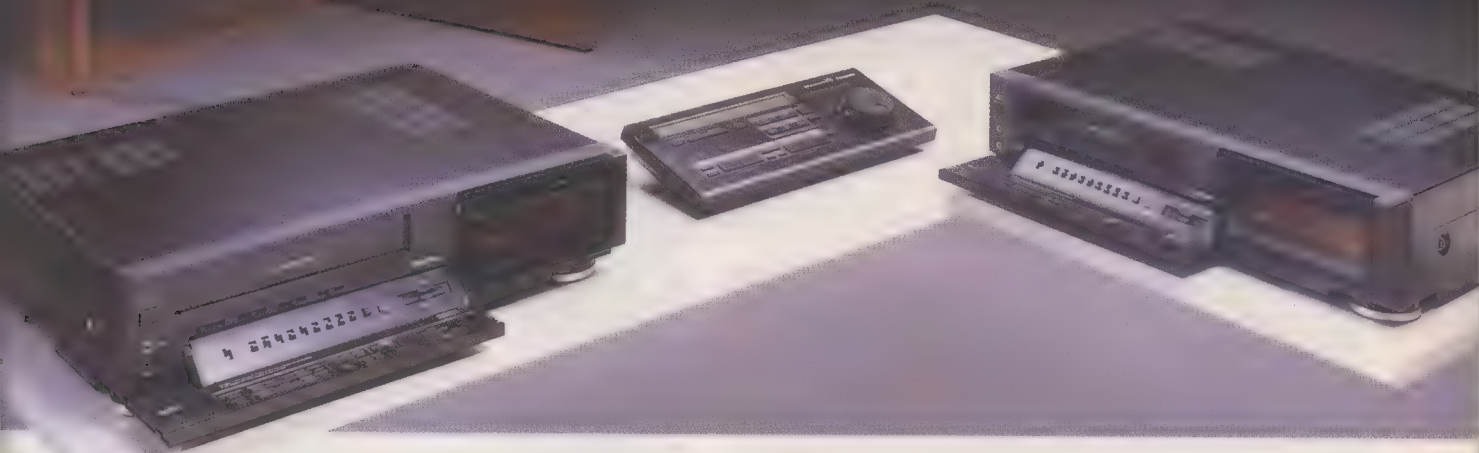
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BY HILARY DUNST

THE WIZARD OF VID

Steve Lincoln's electronic Oz

In 1985 when Hurricane Gloria swept Steve Lincoln's two-story houseboat—complete with \$250,000 worth of audio, video and computer gear—out to sea, he did what any good videophile would have done: he taped it. Lincoln didn't brave the storm with a waterproof camcorder, however. With three RCA TC5001 video cameras mounted inside and on the roof of his land-locked primary residence, he recorded the progress of his houseboat as it pitched, rolled and floated away.

Four years ago, when *Video Magazine* last spoke to Lincoln, the Long Island, New York resident seemed to have everything an electronics whiz could want. There were six VCRs (Beta and VHS), audio systems on both floors of his house, TVs ranging in size from a 1.5-inch color Panasonic to an Advent projection television dominating the den, an Apple computer in a kitchen drawer and a phone system programmed to control it all.

But for Lincoln, who as a teenager wired 600 lightbulbs to his parents' ceiling to blink in time to the stereo, this wasn't enough. Forever upgrading, he built the houseboat (later found floating a few miles away) to handle the overflow from his equipment-packed home.

"My wife wouldn't let me put any more gadgets in the house," grins Lincoln as we enter his nautical playland. Like a kid showing off his new toys on Christmas morning, he plants me in front of the boat's media center and launches us on an electronic magical mystery tour.

Lincoln likes to color coordinate. The audio equipment set into the left side of the brushed brass wall is black. The carpet and panels are gold. The video gear



Checkmate:

An electronic chess set plays itself in Lincoln's kitchen, while an Apple IIc computer regulates lights and appliances.

—a Sony Beta SL-2500 VCR, a Jensen AVS-6200 VHS VCR, a Pioneer LV-700 LaserDisc player and a Pioneer SP-101 surround sound processor—is silver. The boat's audio/video "control center" is a Jensen AVS-2100 video tuner that lets Lincoln switch from one source to another.

"I watch my TV show or videotape on a six-foot Advent 760 projection TV," he explains. "I usually have the 20-inch Sharp TV set up as a computer screen or linked to the security camera to watch my daughter in the crib or to see who's at the front door. And if I'm duplicating a tape, I keep an eye on it with a four-inch Akai SS-V20 monitor."

Off to the side is a brown velour Bodysonic chair by Pioneer that Lincoln uses for surround-sound viewing. "It has speakers at either side of your head and vibrators underneath the seat. The sound comes from the television and the chair vibrates in time to the special effects track on the tape. The effects blow me out of the seat!"



Deck Hand:
Steve Lincoln in his houseboat's elaborate media center (far left). Detail of video panel (left) includes equipment by Sharp, Sony, Jensen and Pioneer.

In the houseboat's kitchen, a drawer conceals an updated version of the computer in the main house. With an Apple IIc and a nine-inch Panasonic CT-1112 monitor that has a built-in video switcher, Lincoln controls the boat's security system, lighting and appliances. He even keeps track of how long food has been left in the freezer.

Steve Lincoln was lucky enough to discover early in life how to make his personal passion profitable. "Even in elementary school I was always tinkering with electronics," he says. By the end of high school, he was running his own business designing electronic musical instruments. Later he became chief engineer for an electronic organ company.

But you don't have to be a whiz-kid to wire your own home, he points out. "Lots of things—like appliances, lights and air-conditioning—can be remote-controlled with wireless X-10 modules you can buy in Radio Shack or Sears outlets," Lincoln asserts. "Where electrical wiring is not involved, there's no reason you



Cruising:
Lincoln's limousine includes a Zenith laptop computer, a fax machine, a cellular phone and an A/V center.

WIZARD OF VID

*Steve Lincoln
will automate
anything, even
underwear.*



Sweet Dreams: Lincoln's bedroom contains a wall of equipment, including a reel-to-reel tape recorder.

can't do it yourself."

Of course, if you have the money but lack the time or inclination, Lincoln can do it for you. His company, Electrasonics, specializes in rigging up everything from simple burglar alarms to systems so complex you may never have to flick on a light again. Lincoln completes about 120 jobs a year. Although some cost as little as \$5,000, it's not unusual for a job to top out at \$250,000.

Lincoln's currently automating a six-story Manhattan townhouse for pop singer Pia Zadora and husband Meshulam Riklis. It's the third big job he's done for the couple. "They have 48 audio speaker systems, 11 TVs (two projection), nine sound systems (of which three are major studio-type set-ups) and 32 telephones. Almost everything is custom built in."

But no job is too small for Lincoln, who

recently fashioned a pair of electronic underpants for porn publisher Al Goldstein. "He was going to an adult filmmakers' convention and wanted to go up on stage, pull down his pants and have his underwear light up," explains Lincoln.

In his own inimitable style, Lincoln recently turned his maroon stretch limousine into a rolling entertainment center. Electrasonics' next venture, he hopes, will be customizing cars.

Zippering down Long Island's modest suburban streets, Lincoln begins gleefully pressing buttons to demonstrate the limo's special effects. "We built what we felt was the ultimate sound system for vehicles," he says, putting into play, jukebox-style, a CD player stored in the trunk. He fiddles some with the Alpine seven-band equalizer and soon we're bouncing along to a thousand watts of Michael Jackson. Suddenly, a Zenith VR-5000 VCR pops up from under the seat, and a compilation tape of Lincoln's TV appearances starts to play. Everything is operated by a customized remote-control panel set into the door.

"Over here is the G-force meter," shouts Lincoln, pointing to a glowing LED. "It tells you if the chauffeur is accelerating or braking smoothly so you'll know if the olive is going to fall out of your martini. If he gets into the red area of the scale, he's driving like a maniac."

Lincoln picks up a Novatel 390 cellular phone and begins preparing his showroom for our arrival. "As I'm coming to my property I can turn on the air-conditioning and the outside lights and heat up the sauna or the hot tub. The system works by remote control, and with the cellular phone it can work from anywhere in the world." Lincoln plans to add an electronic liquor dispenser for thirsty executives.

We cruise into the driveway of a large, modern house which serves as Electrasonics' office and showroom. Most of the 25 rooms are devoid of furniture but wired to show architects and designers their clients' possible power requirements.

Every room, for example, has a triple TV outlet: one jack for a master antenna or cable, a second for closed-circuit television and a third for video output, so a VCR operated from another room can play on a monitor. "We're trying to convince housebuilders that they should install centralized wiring," Lincoln explains.

In the basement, on a mounted display panel, is the pride and joy of the showroom: a new Unity Systems, Inc. Home Manager. "From one location you can control the whole house," says Lincoln, running his fingers lovingly over the system's touch-sensitive screen. "On the main menu you can choose from temperature, lighting or security. If you want to check the temperature, you touch the box that says 'temperature' and floor plans of the house appear on the screen. When you point to the room you want to check, the screen zooms in to that room. If you don't like the temperature reading there, you touch the box that says '70 degrees' and type in a new temperature on the screen's keypad. Not only does it tell you the actual room temperature, it tells you the desired temperature for each season. You can pick different temperatures for each room and not spend money heating or cooling rooms that don't require it."

Lincoln next calls up the Home Manager's security system, which lets a homeowner choose who can enter the house, and when. "Each person who has access to the house is assigned a four-digit code," he explains. "You can set it up so that someone's code number will only shut off the burglar alarm on Mondays through Thursdays. The code number won't work on other days."

Walking back through Lincoln's workshop (where he's inventing a machine to make it easier for dry cleaners to find customers' clothing), we end up in "control central." Located in a loft above the garage, the guts of the system—30 miles of jumbled wire—lie twisted in one corner. The shelves are jam-packed with electronic goodies including more than a dozen VCRs awaiting repair.

What more could Steve Lincoln want? The question inspires a wistful smile. "I'm waiting for projection TVs to have really good quality, and I'm looking forward to 3-D TV," he says. "But I'd really like to have a big place where I can build from scratch. I designed an entertainment center for a piece of property I once planned to buy. I envisioned a building with a miniature golf course on the roof, an amusement park inside with video games, a disco with lights—the whole shebang. I'd really like to have land where there's room to grow and do things."

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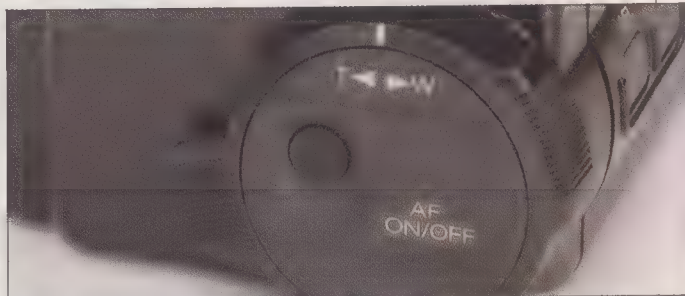
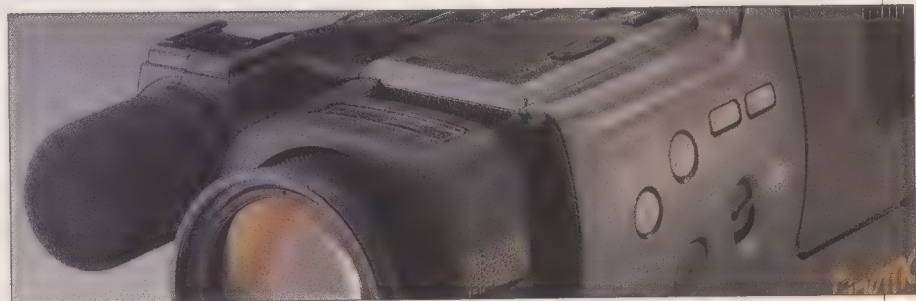
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TRICK SHOOTERS

New camcorders offer studio-quality features and effects.

BY J.T. WAY

Television broadcast technology has gone through a time warp and camcorder technology is starting to follow. TV programs now routinely feature computer graphics mixed with live action, cartoons cavorting with flesh-and-blood actors, clay figures hamming it up like Olivier and head-spinning digital effects. Camcorder makers, too, are beginning to bring these dizzying powers to consumers.

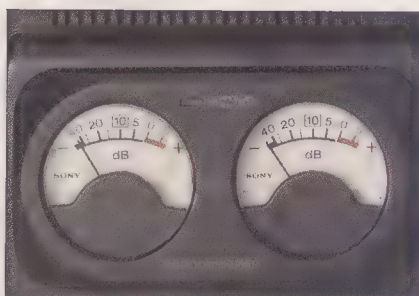
New models boast a growing menu of features formerly found only in TV studios. They include soundtracking, time-lapse photography, animation, titling and, of course, enhanced resolution for more lavish reproduction of color and detail. Some

new features—such as instant audio replay, color viewfinders and background music terminals—enhance what you can do during a shoot. And there's still a lot to be said for last year's camcorder breakthroughs: zone focusing, Video Index and Address Search Systems and variable high-speed shutters.

Past seasons have brought simplified "point-and-shoot" camcorders. Recent debuts, however, are mostly on the high end and for different kinds of people: those who enjoy assembling video collages, who know the rules of camcorder shooting and who are ready to roll up their sleeves and edit. If you fit this bill, you'll love the newest camcorders precisely because they're built on an ambitious technological model:

the multi-million dollar gear that adds sizzle to high-budget television.

One new pro capability to trickle into consumer ranks is animation recording—which can be used to tape hand-drawn cartoons or titles that appear one character at a time—or, best of all, to sculpt Claymation-style dramas. Zenith's Super-VHS VM7500, for \$1,999, and VHS VM7050, for around \$1,500, both have this new "animation mode." The feature works in record standby and is complemented by a dedicated back-panel LCD readout. It automatically records shots at one-quarter, one-half or one-second shutter speeds (using a tripod is recommended). By changing the burst duration, you can create fast or slow segments and dub in the



Fine Tuning:
Details from (top row)
Yashica's 8mm Fine
Movie 8 KD-1700.

Portable Power:
Details from (left to
right) the lens on
Zenith's VHS VM7050,
Chinon's VHS CV-T80,
Sharp's VHS-C VL-750
and Sony's CCD-V220.

Touches of Class:
Details from (left to
right) the lens on Mag-
navox's image-stabilizing
CVJ360, the telephoto
control on Minolta's

VIDEO Reader Service Card

VIDEO Reader Service Card

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1. Are you currently a subscriber to VIDEO? ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Please check the brands of blank tape you've tried in the last 12 months.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A BASF | <input type="checkbox"/> E Memorex | <input type="checkbox"/> J SKC |
| <input type="checkbox"/> B Fuji | <input type="checkbox"/> F Panasonic | <input type="checkbox"/> M Scotch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C JVC | <input type="checkbox"/> G Polaroid | <input type="checkbox"/> N Sony |
| <input type="checkbox"/> D Maxell | <input type="checkbox"/> H RCA | <input type="checkbox"/> P TDK |

3. Which of the following video hardware companies represent the most high-tech image?

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Canon | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Magnavox | <input type="checkbox"/> B RCA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 General Electric | <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Mitsubishi | <input type="checkbox"/> C Sony |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Goldstar | <input type="checkbox"/> 8 NEC | <input type="checkbox"/> D Technics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Hitachi | <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Pioneer | <input type="checkbox"/> E Yamaha |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 JVC | <input type="checkbox"/> A Panasonic | <input type="checkbox"/> F Zenith |

4. Do you own prerecorded video programming? ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Do you subscribe to cable television? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please circle product numbers to receive desired information

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105
106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120
121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135
136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150
151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165
166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180
181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195

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1. Are you currently a subscriber to VIDEO? ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Please check the brands of blank tape you've tried in the last 12 months.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A BASF | <input type="checkbox"/> E Memorex | <input type="checkbox"/> J SKC |
| <input type="checkbox"/> B Fuji | <input type="checkbox"/> F Panasonic | <input type="checkbox"/> M Scotch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C JVC | <input type="checkbox"/> G Polaroid | <input type="checkbox"/> N Sony |
| <input type="checkbox"/> D Maxell | <input type="checkbox"/> H RCA | <input type="checkbox"/> P TDK |

3. Which of the following video hardware companies represent the most high-tech image?

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Canon | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Magnavox | <input type="checkbox"/> B RCA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 General Electric | <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Mitsubishi | <input type="checkbox"/> C Sony |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Goldstar | <input type="checkbox"/> 8 NEC | <input type="checkbox"/> D Technics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Hitachi | <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Pioneer | <input type="checkbox"/> E Yamaha |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 JVC | <input type="checkbox"/> A Panasonic | <input type="checkbox"/> F Zenith |

4. Do you own prerecorded video programming? ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Do you subscribe to cable television? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please circle product numbers to receive desired information

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105
106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120
121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135
136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150
151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165
166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180
181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195

Allow 6-8 weeks for information to arrive. Card expires December 20, 1988 V-10/88



VIDEO

Reader Service Department
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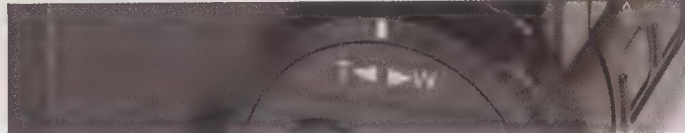
VIDEO

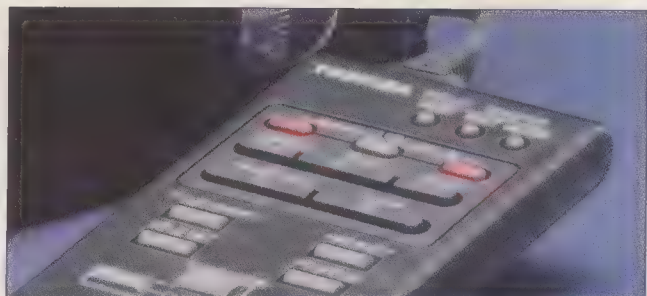
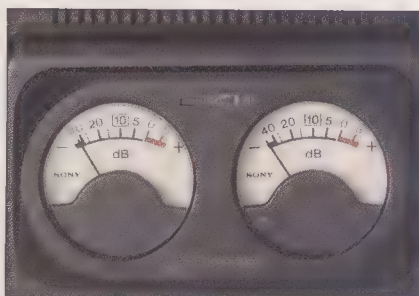
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PLACE
STAMP
HERE

PLACE
STAMP
HERE





Fine Tuning:

Details from (top row) Yashica's 8mm Fine Movie 8 KD-1700.

Portable Power:

Details from (left to right) the lens on Zenith's VHS VM7050, Chinon's VHS CV-T80, Sharp's VHS-C VL-750 and Sony's CCD-V220.

Touches of Class:

Details from (left to right) the lens on Magnavox's image-stabilizing CVJ360, the telephoto control on Minolta's VHS-C C-3400, tilting controls on Sony's CCD-V220 and the wired remote for Toshiba's S-VHS-C SK-V80.

soundtrack later. Animation mode works in macro, and edit transitions are smoothed by a flying erase head.

Another way to warp the fourth dimension is with time-lapse recording. We've all seen speeded-up sequences of sunsets or flowers blooming in professional productions. Several camcorders now include the capability to let you create similar effects at home.

Panasonic's VHS PV-400 and PV-420, for \$1,350 and \$1,450, respectively, both have time-lapse triggers that automatically record for one second every minute. Played back, the effect comes across in minutes as a fast, smooth condensation of hours of activity. Other VHS camcorders featuring time lapse include Panasonic's S-VHS PV-S440 and S-VHS PV-S445, Toshiba's S-VHS-Compact SK-S80 (\$2,850), GE's CG9806 and CG9808 VHS models, Quasar's VHS VM-23AC (\$1,400), Sylvania's VHS VCC159 (\$1,349) and VHS VCC161 (\$1,499) and Magnavox's VHS CVJ310, which tapes ten seconds of video per minute.

Sony's new 8mm CCD-V220, for \$2,500, also has time lapse, here called "interval recording," which automatically tapes eight frames at 15-second intervals. The camcorder also includes PCM digital stereo audio, wips in seven colors, a char-

acter generator, three microphone inputs (including one stereo set), a wind-noise filter on the top-mounted microphone and a variable speed shutter that goes to 1/4000 of a second.

AUDIO EXTRAS

If you want to narrate as you tape on the CCD-V220, you can use a unique side-mounted microphone. A flick of the switch lets you add voice-overs on an AFM (audio frequency modulation) Hi-Fi channel. The ability to add voice-overs in the field raises a question for home directors: how can you check audio during a shoot? Sony solves the problem by providing stereo headphones. Put the machine into play, rewind the tape and watch the viewfinder as you listen.

Several VHS manufacturers have taken audio monitoring in the field one step further by adding speakers to camcorder chasses. Panasonic includes this on its S-VHS leader, the PV-S445, and Chinon on its new VHS CV-T65. Using the Sony, the Panasonic or the Chinon, however, requires leaving the record standby mode and going through some shuttling to review work in the field.

Perhaps they could take a hint from Zenith, which has added a needed "retake" feature to its S-VHS VM7500 and VHS

VM7050. These camcorders don't have speakers, but they let you review shots in the viewfinder with the record mode still activated. Retake is a practical improvement over the more common instant review feature that shows only the last four or 15 seconds of video. Expect to see camcorders that have both speakers and retake in seasons to come.

For now, we'll have to be satisfied with more down-to-earth audio innovations. And here, Zenith scores again with a background music mini-plug input that lets you pipe in ambient music as you shoot while capturing the sound coming into the camcorder's microphone. Background music terminals are also found on Sharp's VHS-C VL-C650U, for \$1,599, VHS-C VL-C750 for \$1,999 and on the VHS VL-L250U, for \$2,199.

The race to provide camcorder users with audio/video screening capabilities in the field has brought forth another delightful feature—the color LCD viewfinder. With a speaker, this provides the final component needed to see and hear a video on location as it will play back on television.

The Chinon VHS CV-T65, for example, brings the viewfinder out of the dark ages with a one-inch color LCD screen, adding to an impressive package that already includes a character generator and

TRICK SHOOTERS

A/V dubbing. Panasonic's PV-S445 also has a one-inch color LCD viewfinder. Thanks to their speakers, you can even watch pre-recorded tapes on these without hooking them up to a TV.

An example of what's yet to come can be found in the Optonica S-VHS camcorder that Sharp is promising for next summer. The VL-C950 will sport a three-inch color LCD TV as a viewfinder, flying erase heads, VISS and a high-speed shutter—all in a two-piece configuration with a removable lens. Dubbing capabilities as well as a background music terminal will also be provided. The whole package will be topped off with a 12:1 zoom lens, which is twice as powerful as today's standard camcorder lens. Sharp is, in fact, leading the way in bringing us 12:1 zooms. Both its VHS-C VL-C750U and VHS VL-L250U units flex muscled lenses, as well as VISS, background music terminals and audio dubbing. ▶

Key To Chart

A: automatic
AIR: audio instant replay
AR: automatic rewind
BLC: backlight compensation
CA: continuous automatic
CG: character generator
CM: counter memory
DFX: digital special effects
EIS: electronic image stabilization

EVF: electronic viewfinder
FE: flying erase head
HJ: headphone jack
LCD: liquid crystal display; 1" color monitor
LTS: linear track stereo
M: manual
MC: macro
N: not present
NA: not available
PA: pushbutton automatic
PCM: pulse code modulated digital audio
RC: remote control
RTC: real time counter
TL: time lapse recording
VA: Video Address Search System
VI: Video Index Search System
VSS: variable-speed shutter
Y: yes, feature present
ZF: zone focusing

Camcorder Buying Guide

Model	Price	Format	Shots	Features	SP	SLP	N
Canon F1000S	\$2,400	S-VHS	4	SP, SLP	SP, SLP	N	
Chinon CV-T65	\$2,000	VHS	4	SP	3X SP	N	
Chinon CV-T80	\$2,500	VHS	2	SP	3X SP	N	
Curtis Mathes BV880	NA	S-VHS	4	SP	SP	SP	
Elmo ECR-8S	\$1,750	8mm	3	SP	SP	SP	
Emerson VCAM18	\$1,600	VHS-C	2	SP, EP	SP, EP	N	
Fisher FVC-901	\$1,500	8mm	3	SP	9X, 7X SP	1/5 SP	
General Electric CG9815	\$1,599	VHS	4	N	N	N	
General Electric CG9825	\$1,799	S-VHS	4	N	N	N	
Hitachi VM-5100A	\$1,300	VHS	4	SP	SP	N	
Hitachi VM-6000A	\$1,700	S-VHS	4	SP	SP	SP	
Hitachi VM-8100	\$2,300	S-VHS	4	SP	SP	SP	
Instant Replay 66 IT3	\$1,995	VHS	4	SP	SP	SP	
JVC GF-S1000HU	\$2,495	S-VHS	4	SP, EP	SP, EP	SP, EP	
JVC GR-S55U	\$1,995	S-VHS-C	2	SP	SP	SP	
Magnavox CVJ320	\$1,500	VHS	4	SP	3X SP	SP	
Magnavox CVJ360	\$2,400	VHS	4	SP, SLP	3X SP, 9X SLP	SP, SLP	
Minolta 8-8100	\$1,915	8mm	3	SP	SP	SP	
Minolta V-2000	\$2,335	S-VHS	4	SP	SP	SP	
Mitsubishi HS-C30U	\$1,600	S-VHS-C	4	SP	SP	SP	
NEC V50U	\$1,859	VHS	2	SP	SP	SP	
NEC CV40U	\$1,799	VHS-C	NA	SP	SP	SP	
Nikon VN-800	\$1,850	8mm	4	SP	SP	SP	
Olympus VX-802	\$1,750	8mm	3	SP	SP	SP	
Olympus VX-S405	\$2,500	S-VHS	4	SP	SP	SP	
Panasonic PV-400	\$1,350	VHS	4	SP	SP	SP	
Panasonic PV-420	\$1,450	VHS	4	SP	SP	NA	
Panasonic PV-460	\$2,250	VHS	2	SP	SP	SP	
Panasonic PV-S445	NA	S-VHS	NA	NA	NA	NA	

1. All camcorders record and play back linear track sound monaurally

VIDEO	NTSC	SECAM	PAL	VI/VA	1/2" CCD	8-80	f/1.4	10 lux	CA	A/M	EVF	FE, RTC, VSS, ZF
N	N	Y/Y	N	VI/VA	1/2" CCD	8.5-68	f/1.2	7 lux	PA	A/BLC	LCD	AIR, CG, CM, FE, HJ, MC, RC, TL, VSS
N	Y	Y/Y	N	N	1/2" CCD	8-80	f/1.6	15 lux	PA	A/BLC	EVF	CM, EIS, FE, MC, VSS
Y	Y	Y/Y	N	VI/VA	1/2" CCD	8.5-51	f/1.2	1 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	FE, VSS
N	Y	Y/Y	N	N	1/2" CCD	9-54	f/1.2	7 lux	PA	A/BLC	EVF	AR, FE, MC, VSS, ZF
N	Y	Y/Y	N	N	1/2" CCD	9-54	f/1.4	10 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	AR, CM, HJ
N	N	Y/Y	N	N	2/3" CCD	12-72	f/1.6	5 lux	PA	A/BLC	EVF	MC, VSS
N	N	Y/Y	N	N	1/2" MOS	8.5-51	f/1.4	7 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	FE, MC, TL
Y	N	Y/Y	N	N	1/2" CCD	8.5-51	f/1.4	7 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	FE, MC, TL
N	Y	N/N	N	N	2/3" MOS	11-88	f/1.2	5 lux	PA	A/M	EVF	EIS, MC, VSS
Y	Y	Y/Y	N	N	2/3" MOS	11-88	f/1.2	7 lux	PA	A/BLC	EVF	HJ, MC, RTC
Y	N	N/N	N	VI/VA	2/3" CCD	11-88	f/1.2	1 lux	PA	A/BLC	EVF	DFX, MC, VSS
N	N	N/N	N	N	1/2" CCD	9-54	f/1.2	10 lux	CA	A	EVF	CG, HJ, MC, RC, PAL/SECAM/NTSC
Y	Y	Y/Y	Y	N	2/3" CCD	12-72	f/1.4	8 lux	PA	A/BLC	EVF	FE, RC, RTC, VSS, ZF
Y	Y	Y/Y	N	N	1/2" CCD	9-54	f/1.4	10 lux	PA	A/BLC	EVF	CM, HJ, MC, RTC, VSS
N	N	Y/Y	N	VI/VA	1/2" CCD	9-54	f/1.4	7 lux	PA	A/BLC	EVF	AR, FE, MC, RC, TL, VSS
N	N	Y/Y	N	VI/VA	1/2" CCD	8-80	f/1.6	10 lux	PA	A/BLC	EVF	AR, EIS, FE, MC, RC, VSS
N	Y	N/N	N	N	1/2" MOS	9-54	f/1.2	7 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	FE, MC, VSS
Y	Y	Y/Y	N	N	2/3" MOS	11-88	f/1.2	7 lux	PA	A/M	EVF	CG, CM, HJ, MC, RTC
Y	Y	Y/Y	N	VI/VA	1/2" CCD	9-54	f/1.2	10 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	CM, MC, VSS
N	Y	Y/N	N	N	1/2" CCD	9-54	f/1.2	10 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	FE, MC, VSS
N	Y	Y/Y	N	VI/VA	1/2" CCD	9-54	f/1.2	10 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	—
N	Y	N/N	N	N	1/2" CCD	9-54	f/1.2	7 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	FE, HJ, MC, RC, VSS, ZF
N	Y	N/N	N	N	1/2" CCD	9-54	f/1.2	7 lux	PA	A/BLC	EVF	FE, MC, RC, VSS, ZF
Y	Y	Y/Y	N	VI/VA	1/2" CCD	8.5-68	f/1.2	1 lux	CA	A/BLC	EVF	DFX, FE, MC, RC, VSS
N	N	N/N	N	VI/VA	1/2" CCD	9-54	NA	7 lux	PA	A/BLC	EVF	MC, RC, TL, VSS
N	N	Y/Y	N	VI/VA	1/2" CCD	8.5-68	f/1.4	7 lux	PA	A/BLC	EVF	FE, MC, TL, VSS
N	Y	Y/Y	N	VI/VA	1/2" CCD	8-80	f/1.6	15 lux	PA	A/BLC	EVF	EIS, FE, MC, VSS
Y	N	Y/Y	N	NA	1/2" CCD	NA	NA	7 lux	A	A	LCD	AIR, CG, FE, MC, TL, VSS

and include autofocus lenses unless noted otherwise under Special Features. 2. In millimeters.

TRICK SHOOTERS

Chinon's VHS EZ Movie CV-T80, for \$2,500, features a high-power 10:1 zoom lens with a choice of two speeds. One drawback of such a powerful lens is that at the higher zoom ratios every little jitter shows as an annoying jump. The results, unless you're rock steady or using a tripod, can look downright unprofessional.

STEADY AS THEY GO

The manufacturers' answer is an electronic image stabilizer that compensates for shakes and wobbles. It's now found on camcorders from Panasonic, Philips, Chinon and Magnavox. In broadcast television, pros use complex gyroscopic lens assemblies to film shaky situations—from a helicopter, for example. Equipping consumer camcorders with the same gyro-gear would be too expensive, but engineers have found that mounting a lens on servo-controlled gimbals significantly re-

continued on page 125

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LTS: linear track stereo
M: manual
MC: macro
N: not present
NA: not available
PA: pushbutton automatic
PCM: pulse code modulated digital audio
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TL: time lapse recording
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VI: Video Index Search System
VSS: variable-speed shutter
Y: yes, feature present
ZF: zone focusing

Camcorder Buying Guide

	PRICE	TYPE	VIEWFINDER	SEARCH	RECORDING	PLAYBACK
Pentax PV-C1SA	\$1,899	S-VHS	4	SP	SP	SP
Pentax PV-C850A	\$1,849	8mm	3	SP	SP	1/5 SP
Philips CPJ815	\$2,699	VHS	4	SP, SLP	3X SP 9X SLP	SP, SLP
Quasar VM-22AC	\$1,999	S-VHS	4	SP, SLP	2X SP 6X SLP	SP, SLP
Quasar VM-52AC	\$1,799	S-VHS-C	8	SP, SLP	3X SP 9X SLP	SP, SLP
RCA CC150	\$1,079	VHS-C	4	SP	SP	N
RCA CC175	\$1,599	S-VHS-C	4	SP	SP	N
RCA CC300	\$1,399	VHS	4	SP	SP	N
RCA CC350	\$1,799	S-VHS	4	SP	SP	N
Realistic Model 100	\$1,299	VHS	4	SP	3X SP	N
Realistic Model 150	\$1,299	VHS-C	4	N	3X SP	N
Ricoh R-600S	\$1,799	8mm	2	SP	SP	N
Sanyo VMD5	\$1,500	8mm	3	SP	9X, 7X SP	SP
Sharp VL-C750U	\$1,999	VHS-C	4	SP	SP	N
Sharp VL-C855UA	\$1,799	VHS-C	4	EP	EP	N
Sharp VL-L250U	\$2,199	VHS	4	SP	SP	N
Sony CCD-F40	\$1,750	8mm	2	SP	SP	SP
Sony CCD-V220	\$2,500	8mm	2	SP	N	SP
Sony EDC-55	\$7,700	ED Beta	2	N	N	N
Sylvania VCC161	\$1,499	VHS	NA	NA	NA	NA
Tamron CX-7	\$1,719	8mm	2	SP	SP	SP
Toshiba SK-3D7	\$2,850	VHS-C	4	SP, EP	SP, EP	SP, EP
Toshiba SK-S80	\$1,996	S-VHS-C	4	SP, EP	SP, EP	SP, EP
Vivitar Magic 8	\$1,695	8mm	3	SP	SP	SP
Yashica KD-1700U	\$1,695	8mm	NA	N	SP	N
Zenith VM6180	NA	VHS-C	4	SP, EP	3X SP 7X EP	N
Zenith VM6500	\$1,799	S-VHS-C	4	SP, EP	3X SP 7X EP	N
Zenith VM7050	\$1,499	VHS	2	SP	5X SP	N
Zenith VM7500	\$1,999	S-VHS	2	SP	SP	N

Chart by Martin Porter & Associates based on information provided by manufacturers.

1. All camcorders record and play back linear track sound monaurally

Color LCD	Auto Switch	Auto Focus	AF	Auto Zoom	Image Sensor	Resolution	Aperture	Light Meter	Shutter	Viewfinder	EVF	Special Features
Y	Y	N/N	N	VI/VA	2/3" MOS	11-88	f/1.2	10 lux	CA	A/M	EVF	HJ, MC, RTC, ZF
N	Y	N/N	N	N	1/2" CCD	9-54	f/1.4	7 lux	CA	A/M	EVF	CM, HJ, RTC
N	N	Y/Y	N	VI/VA	1/2" CCD	8-80	f/1.6	10 lux	A	A	EVF	AR, EIS, FE, MC, RC, VSS
N	Y	Y/Y	N	VI/VA	1/2" CCD	8.5-68	f/1.2	7 lux	CA	A/BLC	EVF	AR, CM, DFX, FE, MC, VSS
Y	Y	Y/Y	N	VI/VA	1/2" CCD	9-54	f/1.2	7 lux	CA	A/BLC	EVF	AR, CM, FE, MC, VSS
N	N	N/N	N	N	2/3" MOS	NA	f/1.6	7 lux	CA	A/BLC	EVF	HJ, VSS
Y	N	N/N	N	N	2/3" MOS	NA	f/1.6	7 lux	CA	A/BLC	EVF	CM, HJ, MC, VSS
N	N	N/N	N	N	2/3" MOS	NA	f/1.2	5 lux	CA	A/BLC	EVF	HJ, MC, VSS
Y	N	N/N	N	N	2/3" MOS	NA	f/1.2	5 lux	CA	A/BLC	EVF	HJ, MC, VSS
N	N	N/N	N	N	2/3" MOS	11.5-69	f/1.6	7 lux	CA	A	EVF	—
N	N	N/N	N	N	2/3" MOS	11.5-69	f/1.6	7 lux	CA	A	EVF	—
N	Y	Y/Y	N	VI/VA	2/3" CCD	12-72	f/1.6	5 lux	A	A/M	EVF	CM, FE, HJ, MC, RTC, VSS
N	N	N/N	N	N	2/3" CCD	12-72	f/1.6	5 lux	PA	A/BLC	EVF	MC, VSS, ZF
N	Y	Y/N	N	VI/VA	1/2" CCD	8-96	f/1.6	8 lux	CA	A	EVF	FE, VSS
N	Y	N/N	N	VI/VA	1/2" CCD	NA	f/1.4	8 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	MC, VSS
N	Y	Y/N	N	VI/VA	1/2" CCD	8-96	f/1.6	8 lux	CA	A	EVF	FE, MC, VSS
N	Y	N/N	N	N	1/2" CCD	9-54	f/1.4	4 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	CG, MC, VSS
N	Y	Y/N	Y	N	2/3" CCD	11-88	f/1.2	4 lux	PA	A/BLC	EVF	interval record, CG, FE, MC, PCM, VSS
N	Y	N/N	N	N	2 CCDs	NA	f/1.6	25 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	FE, MC
N	NA	NA	N	N	1/2" CCD	NA	NA	NA	A	A	EVF	FE, TL, VSS
N	Y	Y/Y	N	N	1/2" CCD	9-54	f/1.4	10 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	DFX, MC
N	N	N/N	N	N	1/2" CCD	9mm (fixed)	f/1.6	15 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	3D
Y	N	N/N	N	N	2/3" CCD	12-72	f/1.7	15 lux	CA	A/BLC	EVF	CG, RC, RTC, TL
N	Y	N/N	N	N	1/2" CCD	9-54	f/1.6	9 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	FE, MC, VSS
N	Y	N/N	N	N	1/2" CCD	12-72	f/1.6	9 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	FE, HJ, MC
N	N	N/N	N	N	1/2" CCD	8.5-51	f/1.4	10 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	FE, MC, VSS
Y	Y	Y/Y	N	N	1/2" CCD	9-54	f/1.6	10 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	AR, CM, MC, RC, VSS, ZF
N	Y	Y/Y	N	VI/VA	2/3" CCD	9-54	f/1.4	7 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	animation, CM, FE, MC, RC, VSS, ZF
Y	Y	Y/Y	N	VI/VA	1/2" CCD	8.5-68	f/1.6	7 lux	A	A/BLC	EVF	animation, FE, MC, VSS, ZF

and include autofocus lenses unless noted otherwise under Special Features. 2. In millimeters.

The Roots of Video: Part III

ROMANCING THE CASSETTE

How entrepreneurs fought Hollywood to invent the idea of renting movies on tape.

In the autumn of 1976, Andre Blay, a Michigan-based distributor of video equipment, sent a "cold call letter" to the Hollywood studios inquiring about the right to market their movies on videocassettes. Only two companies bothered to respond, and one, MGM, simply informed Blay that the matter—not his proposal in particular, but the outlook for pre-recorded videocassettes in general—was under study.

The home VCR was still a novelty, and studio executives were divided in their attitude toward it—divided, that is, between indifference and panic. Universal Pictures had filed a lawsuit charging that Sony, merely by selling VCRs, was a party to copyright infringement. Sidney Sheinberg, Universal's president, felt so strongly about the threat that he renounced the co-chairmanship of a benefit for the American Film Institute upon learning that Sony had contributed \$300,000 to the same cause. "I cannot condone or support any institution which is so oblivious to the interests of the Hollywood community," Sheinberg explained.

This article concludes a three-part series on the roots of home video, adapted by James Lardner from Fast Forward: Hollywood, the Japanese and the Onslaught of the VCR (New American Library).

Andre Blay's idea challenged the old Hollywood policy of never parting with the title to a copy of a movie. Once a movie had been sold on videocassette, how could a studio monitor the size of the audience? How could it keep people from making unauthorized copies? What value, if any, would a movie retain in the theatrical and TV markets? But the '70s were tumultuous for Hollywood. If a studio continued to turn a nice profit, the management could expect to stick around. If not, they'd be out on their ears.

By 1976 Twentieth Century-Fox had been through a few difficult years, and there was not a lot of idle cash sitting around. So the company was ripe for a new idea, especially one that wouldn't cost much up front.

In addition, Fox had a subsidiary known as Twentieth Century-Fox Telecommunications. Running it was a young executive named Steven Roberts, who resembled Dick Clark of *American Bandstand* fame. Cable TV was Roberts' principal domain, and it seemed to him that Hollywood had misjudged cable at first, seeing only a threat to movie theaters rather than a way to reach a new audience.

"I took the position that I never wanted to see our company let a new technology come along and bury its head in the sand,"



CASSETTES

Roberts said later. It behooved Fox, Roberts felt, to find out just how much demand existed for movies on cassette and if there was some way to satisfy it without giving aid and comfort to the pirates. Maybe the way to beat them was to compete with them.

Blay's letter found its way to Roberts just as he was preparing an experiment. "We were about to go into the business ourselves—to test the waters," Roberts said. "We would use films that were already on commercial television, so I felt we were risking very little, since anyone who wanted them could tape them off the air as it was. But we were going to sell those films without the commercials and unedited."

For a trial venture it seemed sensible to let somebody else invest the capital, and here was Blay, ready, willing and apparently able. The contract they signed in July 1977 called for Blay to advance Fox \$300,000, plus a minimum of \$500,000 a year, against a royalty of \$7.50 on each cassette sold. Blay would have the nonexclusive right to choose 50 titles—all movies previously sold to network TV—from a list of 100 prepared by Fox.

Basing his choices on *Variety's* estimates of box-office receipts, Blay selected *Hello, Dolly!*, *M*A*S*H*, *Patton*, *The French Connection*, *The King and I*, *Beneath the Planet of the Apes*, *The Sound of Music*, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and 42 others.

Blay's company, Magnetic Video, already had a few machines with which to duplicate Beta and VHS cassettes. But the new venture was on a different scale. "Until then, 50 copies a week were a lot," Blay said. "There was no one in the world equipped to undertake this mission. So we had to build a facility to make 20,000 cassettes a month. That was an unheard-of figure at the time, although now there are factories that make half a million or more."

By October, Blay was ready to start selling. He began by taking out ads in trade publications that catered to record and appliance stores. The appliance stores were "ill-equipped to build a long-term business," Blay said later, but he saw them as a bridge to carry him through until a better outlet presented itself. He also made a few tie-in deals with VCR makers, allowing them to offer free or discounted cassettes



The way to beat the pirates was to compete with them.

to their customers. And, with a \$65,000 advertisement in *TV Guide*, he launched a direct-mail operation called the Video Club of America.

The ad was a stunning success. From a potential pool of fewer than 200,000 VCR owners, 9,000 joined Blay's club. The \$10 membership fees alone more than covered the cost of the ad. *The French Connection* and *M*A*S*H* turned out to be the most popular titles, but some customers weren't choosy. "I remember taking a phone call," Blay recalled, "and the guy said, 'I read about the club and I want to join, but I don't want to wait because I know the mail takes a long time. Can you take my Visa number?' It turned out he was a veterinarian calling from his mobile phone in North Carolina. Cassettes were selling for \$50 each and he ordered the entire catalogue of 50 titles over the phone."

The Fox titles went on sale just as RCA and Sony were going head to head with pre-Christmas ad campaigns for VCRs and just as new models that bore Zenith, Sylvania and Magnavox labels were bringing prices under \$1,000. As the number of VCRs grew, so did the demand for pre-recorded cassettes. By March 1978 Magnetic Video had sold 40,000 cassettes, most of them to retailers for a wholesale price of \$37.50 each, but a healthy number of individuals who joined the Video Club had paid \$49.95 for each cassette. By the end of 1978 Blay had sold 250,000 cassettes, and his production capacity was up to 30,000 a week, with the factory going 24 hours a day.

BORN TO RENT

While Blay was staging his fireworks show from a distance, George Atkinson was laying dynamite closer to home. Atkinson was another nobody, but he was a Hollywood nobody. A fast-talking chain-smoker, he had been dabbling in various forms of portable movie exhibition, with unspectacular results, for more than a decade.

At the time, Atkinson was running what he calls "a Mickey Mouse business" out of a 600-square-foot storefront on Wilshire Boulevard in West Los Angeles. Called Home Theater Systems, the company supplied parties with Super-8 movies. It wasn't going well. On the personal level, Atkinson had been through a divorce and a period of hard drinking that culminated with his living in back of the store, "saucing it pretty good," as he said later. Fox's deal with Magnetic Video brought him to life. If there were people who would pay \$25 for the privilege of lugging a Super-8 projector, a screen and an old movie home for the night, surely a lot more would pay a few dollars to rent a movie on a videocassette.

To test his theory, Atkinson put an ad in the *Los Angeles Times*. "Video for Rent," it said, though in truth he had nothing to rent. Readers were invited to fill out a coupon and mail it in. "In less than a week," Atkinson said, "I had about 1,000 coupons."

Stimulated by this confirmation of his instincts and subsidized to the tune of \$10,000 by a high school buddy who saw a good investment, Atkinson bought one Beta and one VHS copy of all 50 Fox titles, not from Magnetic Video directly, because he wasn't big enough to afford the \$8,000 minimum order, but from a local appliance dealer who agreed to let him have the tapes for \$3 above wholesale. Then Atkinson took out another ad in the *Times*. It was only an inch high and a column wide, but it had the phone "lighting up like Christmas."

Starved for customers, Atkinson established a club. He charged \$50 for an annual membership and \$100 for a "life membership." A member was entitled to rent movies for \$10 a day.

Some of the first customers wanted to buy rather than rent. They were "your Cadillac and Mercedes crowd who would take 10, 15, 20 movies at a crack," Atkinson said. Happy as he was to take their



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Warner Bros. was told it was 'giving away its crown jewels.'

money, he didn't have much hope for that side of the business. "The studio executives said Americans are not a renting public—like the English, who rent television sets," Atkinson said. "They said, 'Americans are an acquisitive people. They want to own.' I said, 'Well, movies may be the exception.'"

He was alone in his thinking. None of the appliance stores that carried the Fox cassettes were renting them. In fact, their contracts with Magnetic Video stipulated that the cassettes were to be sold for home use only. Atkinson suspected Fox's executives wouldn't like what he was doing if they knew about it. The possibility that he might be violating the law crossed his mind, and he made a few phone calls—to the FBI and the Motion Picture Association of America, among other authorities. Was he or wasn't he allowed to rent? Nobody could say for sure.

In January 1978 Atkinson attended the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas to try to buy more cassettes. A few independent operators were selling a variety of odd fare, mostly "adult" titles and movies for which the copyright had lapsed or fallen into non-studio hands. Atkinson made connections with a few of these people. He also introduced himself to Andre Blay and posed the question. But Blay, too, "could give me no authority to rent," Atkinson recalled. "He said, 'Talk to Steve Roberts.' And Roberts' response was: 'Very interesting. What would you charge? Would you let the studio participate?' I said, 'Of course. I'd like your blessing.' Roberts said, 'Write me a letter.' I thought I was getting the green light."

But after a few months, Atkinson received a call from Robert Townsend, the author of *Up the Organization*, who had been retained by Fox to study the cassette market. "We went and had a Chinese lunch," Atkinson recalled. "It was all very chummy. He bought a couple of movies. He might even have rented. Then I got a phone call a few weeks later: 'Hi, George, how's it going?' I said, 'Great, I'm starting to clone myself. I put a guy into business in Pasadena.' And Townsend said, 'Well, you'd better not rent. Just a friendly tip—you're going to be in a lot of trouble, George.' Boy, I got scared! I had my life savings tied up. Worse, I'd gone through a divorce and I was in debt. My whole life

was pivoting on my future in video, and here came this dire threat from a big man at a big studio."

The time had come, Atkinson concluded, to invest in legal counsel. His lawyer researched the question and told him, "You can't copy it, you can't publicly exhibit it—that's a violation of copyright. But you can rent it, you can eat it, you can destroy it. You bought it. It's your property."

The idea of rental was, of course, in keeping with the Hollywood tradition of selling the right to see a movie rather than the movie itself. But with the phenomenal early success of the Fox experiment, studio executives' heads began dancing with visions of vast video libraries in millions of American homes. If people would pay \$50 or more to be able to take Bogart and Bacall or Redford and Newman off the shelf at will, what sense did it make to offer them a lower-priced alternative?

It made very little sense to Roberts and his colleagues, especially since the law gave them no way to compel retailers to give the studio a piece of any rental action. Rental was an idea to study for the future. For now, Fox and Magnetic Video would make their distributors and retailers promise not to rent, and anyone who disobeyed would be cut off. This sounded foolproof. But Atkinson discovered there was nothing to stop him from "getting my stuff from another retailer or a friendly distributor." As a third party he could not be bound by a contract between Fox and somebody else.

Almost from the day Atkinson opened his store, there were some customers who looked around with suspicious intensity. Sometimes they couldn't hold it in—the desire to know how they, too, could get into the videocassette business. Atkinson helped one start a store. Then, satisfied his setup was replicable, he decided to franchise it. He placed an ad in the business opportunities column of the *Wall Street Journal* and hired a franchise salesman, Ray Fenster, to handle the responses.

"We made it very easy," Atkinson said. "It was a turnkey operation. We didn't take any royalties. They bought the goods from us and we charged them for licensing the territory. So there was a 25 percent profit over our costs—but with that you got an education. You know, how do I print a rental form? What kind of invoice do I use? If you had less than \$10,000, we could get

you started, and we were selling eight to ten stores a month. Later Ray opened a store of his own and became a competitor of mine with big offices in Beverly Hills."

COUNTERATTACK

Notwithstanding its failure to control Atkinson and others like him, Fox made a good deal of money from home video over the next few years. Eyeing Fox's success, the other studios, one by one, took the plunge. How could they face their stockholders, after all, if they ignored such a bountiful source of "found money?" But the new medium still made them uneasy.

One summer day in 1980, Frank Wells and Ted Ashley, the president and chairman, respectively, of Warner Bros., unloaded some of their concerns on Morton Fink, president of the newly-formed Warner Home Video.

As Fink recalled, Wells and Ashley were concerned that the studios had found themselves contending with the "video software dealer," a species of small businessperson whose existence they had never contemplated, and that the market had shifted from sales toward rentals. The typical Warner cassette, at \$79.95 retail, brought Warner Bros. a royalty of about \$10—a handsome return if multiplied by millions of individual purchasers, but far less attractive when multiplied by 15,000 video store owners, each of them free to take a cassette which had cost, say, \$50 wholesale, and rent it out 100 times or more at \$5 a shot. To Wells and Ashley and their colleagues, it seemed as if their share was a pittance compared to the money flowing to the retailers, the VCR manufacturers and just about everybody else involved.

The public, too, seemed to be getting a big return on a small investment. Already a number of stores had lowered rental prices to \$2. Even \$1 rentals were not unheard of. As the number of VCRs grew, home video was bound to become a more important element of the movie business—conceivably at the expense of movie theaters—and the thought of masses of Americans paying \$1 or \$2 (per family) to see movies that cost up to \$20 million to produce was more than any red-blooded studio boss could bear. Warner Bros., Fink was told, was "giving away its crown jewels."

"Why can't you license motion pictures to retailers the way we license them to theaters?" Wells asked Fink. It was more than a friendly suggestion. The message, as Fink received it, was: "Unless you come up with a business system that allows us to participate in all the rentals that take place, you won't get any more product."

The result, unveiled in the fall of 1981, was the Warner Home Video Rental Plan. The business had experienced an "irreversible, dramatic, consistent trend toward rentals," Fink stated in announcing the plan, and Warner was going to go with the flow. Although it would be too difficult to actually collect a percentage of each consumer rental, Warner would do the next best thing—it would lease its cassettes to retailers. The rates would start high and gradually decline as consumer interest in a title declined.

The Warner plan would benefit all parties, according to Fink, since retailers would be able to stock more copies of hot titles and thus generate more business. In any case, there would be no turning back. "We will no longer sell our product to anyone," Fink declared.

In the fall of 1981, the nation's video dealers were a disorganized and unsophis-

ticated lot, with little retail experience and neither the time nor the money to spend on fraternizing with their peers. But the Warner rental plan brought them to political life. Atkinson, speaking on behalf of 300 of his affiliated stores, called for a *de facto* boycott of the "Warner Rocky Horror Rental Show." His stores could get by without Warner's movies, Atkinson said, "so it's not the end of the world."

The boycott quickly spread, despite Warner's frenzied efforts to modify the plan. At the Consumer Electronics Show that winter, one group of angry video dealers briefly threatened to rip apart the catalogues at the Warner Home Video booth. The pioneers of video retail had weathered some hard years. Now they were starting to pay themselves salaries, to take a little time off, and maybe even to work at a desk, executive-style, instead of chained to a cash register.

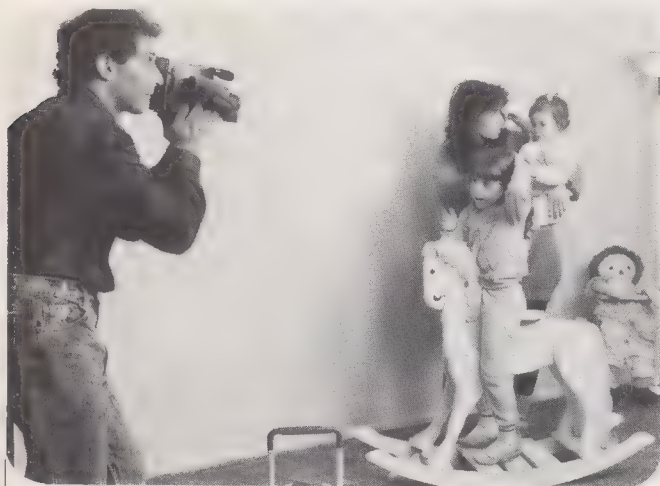
No matter how much the studios insisted they were trying to improve the business for everybody, it looked to the dealers as if Hollywood wanted a bigger share of the take.

By the summer of 1982 the Warner rental plan, and similar plans by MGM and Fox, were history. The studios redirected

their energies toward Washington, winning the Reagan Administration's support for a bill that would make each rental a transaction requiring the copyright owner's approval. But on Capitol Hill, too, the video dealers were more than a match for the movie industry.

In the spring of 1984, when a Senate subcommittee threatened to approve the studios' bill, the members of the subcommittee found full-page ads in their local papers that warned readers, "DO YOU WANT TO PAY MORE TO RENT MOVIES? IF NOT, CALL SENATOR --- TODAY!" In the face of such opposition, the senators decided to let the issue slide, and it soon slid right off the congressional calendar.

Over the next few years, the studios began to offer new movies at a relatively high price and then, after the rental demand had tailed off, to reissue them at a lower price intended to spur consumer purchases. Thus, Hollywood managed to achieve, by marketing strategy, some of what it had been after in its legislative quest. But the policy of owning every copy of a movie was gone forever, and most of the studio executives were too busy counting money to mourn. ■



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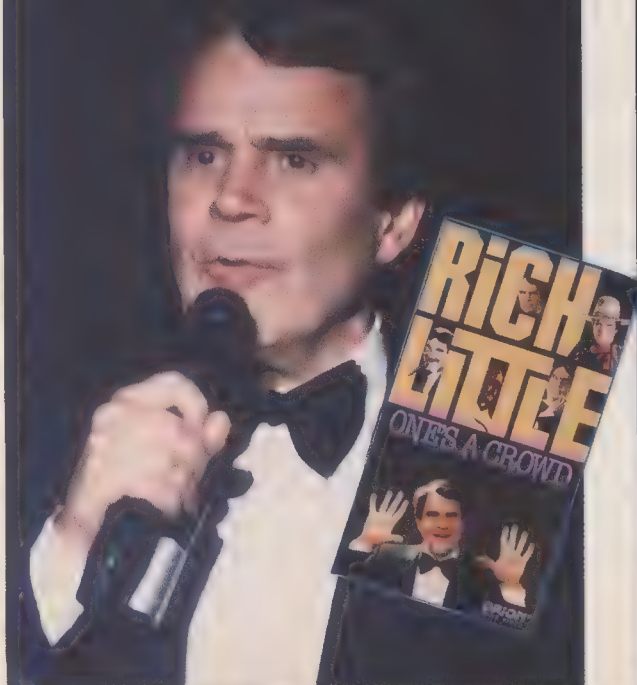
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PROGRAMMING

Theatrical Releases



Film at Ten:

William Hurt (above) and Holly Hunter (right) form two-thirds of the romantic triangle in 'Broadcast News.'



Broadcast News

1987. *Holly Hunter, William Hurt, Albert Brooks; wr./pr./dir. James L. Brooks. 132m. (R) Hi St cc \$89.98. CBS/Fox. Image: good.*

Once upon a time, Mary Richards spent the night in jail for refusing to reveal the identity of her confidential source. Today's journalistic dilemmas, according to *Broadcast News*, are a bit trickier. Directed by *Mary Tyler Moore Show* executive producer and *Terms of Endearment* director James L. Brooks, *Broadcast News* has been given heavy coverage by the news media itself—flattered by the attention, if not the portrayal.

The story focuses on network news producer Jane Craig (Hunter), an intense, neurotic super-achiever who makes time in her schedule for periodic emotional breakdowns. Speaking before a broadcasters' group about the declining standards of TV

news, Jane meets the handsome Tom Grunick (Hurt), a former sportscaster with no journalistic experience recently hired by Jane's newsroom. She finds herself hopelessly attracted to Tom, although he personifies the trend towards shallow superficiality that she abhors in television news. The third point of the triangle is high-strung reporter Aaron Altman (Brooks), a paragon of journalistic virtue who suffers a largely unreciprocated love for Jane.

Broadcast News has been saluted as a film in which the emotional plot lines are cleverly interwoven with the professional dilemmas faced by the characters—the "selling" of news, sensationalized reporting, ratings-based layoffs and the like. If this had been a less studious attempt to throw every burning issue of broadcast journalism into the same pot, perhaps it would be easier to swallow. Despite the depiction of TV newsmen as smile-school bubbleheads or cold, ruthless stalk-

ers, the satire is of a gentler sort than that in Paddy Chayevsky's nutty *Network*.

The true strengths of *Broadcast News* lie in the skillfully etched, painfully funny portraits of Jane, Tom and Aaron. A romantic comedy more than a relevant comedy, viewers will adore the characters for their flaky humanity, even when their dreary sense of professionalism seems like an intrusive commercial break.

—Drew Wheeler

Empire of the Sun

1987. *Christian Bale, John Malkovich, Nigel Havers, Miranda Richardson; wr. Tom Stoppard; dir. Steven Spielberg. 153m. (PG) Hi ss cc (also Spanish-sub.) \$89.95. LV CX ss \$39.98. Warner. V image: excel.*

Empire of the Sun is the most physically imposing movie by an American director in years. It's also the most physically exhausting to watch—owing to both its pow-

Theatrical Releases



War of the World: Christian Bale (center) suffers through WW II in 'Empire of the Sun.'

erful emotional content and its wildly uneven execution. Adapted from J.G. Ballard's novel, *Empire* tells of Jim Graham, a pampered child of Shanghai's international community in 1941. When the Japanese invade, he's separated from his parents and ends up in a detention camp. His struggle to survive parallels his struggle to attain maturity. Unable to give up his admiration of Japanese planes and pilots, and accustomed to being the center of attention, he's not sure he wants the war to end.

This is perfect material for Steven Spielberg. Confronted with fatherhood and his fortieth birthday, and attempting to jettison his "boy wonder" image for good, he can well be expected to identify with a boy who must finally cast childhood aside. Spielberg's vision of one boy's war is truly epic: impressive settings (he took full advantage of the opportunity to shoot in Shanghai), huge crowd scenes, spectacular air battles and dazzling visual effects.

Spielberg also effectively field-marshalls a large cast, and demonstrates an improved grasp of symbolism and physical detail. In this picture, a simple slap to the face carries as much personal impact as the Nagasaki A-bomb. Young Bale does yeoman work in a role that would tax an experienced adult.

There are, however, big problems in the storytelling, especially in the second half. Although Tom Stoppard's script is cleverly constructed, the finished product

contains long stretches that seem to go nowhere, bits that should have been cut or redone and an overblown John Williams score that actually diminishes key scenes. Rushed post-production may have had something to do with this. It's also possible that Spielberg, discovering how good a director he can really be, couldn't bear to leave some things out.

My own advice is to just sit back and take *Empire* as it comes; the best moments are worth it. Unfortunately, however, even the videotape's great transfer and gorgeous hi-fi sound don't make up for the loss of the big screen.

—Sol Louis Siegel

Cinderella

1950. Anim. Dir Wilfred Jackson, Hamilton Luske, Clyde Geronimi. 76m. (G) Hi St cc V/B/LV \$26.99. Disney. V image: excel.

Walt Disney must have liked *Cinderella*, for he recycled many of its visual ideas in *Sleeping Beauty*. Released in 1950, *Cinderella*'s clean, schematic backgrounds resemble the creeping modernism of *Sleeping Beauty* (1959) more than the detailed chiaroscuro of *Pinocchio* (1939). Both protagonists are bland Barbies who are friendly with animals; even their fairy godmothers are dead ringers. And both films tell ancient children's stories of love that have

an odd, aching relevance today, so many years after the death of innocence.

Most of *Cinderella*'s visual interest resides in the minor characters: the angular-faced stepmother, her nasty daughters and all those animals. The mice, the agents of fate who scramble to seal the romance of Cinderella and the Prince, look like Italian peasants. They have cute names like Gus, Jaq, Luke, Mert, Bert, Suzy, Perla and Blossom. And Disney predictably produced yet another cruelly derogatory cat character—an anti-cat, you might say—who resembles Charles Laughton, is named Lucifer and snores.

Cinderella doesn't sit still for a minute: Disney's directors pepper it with incessant bits of business. Our fair heroine sings a duet with her own reflection in a soap bubble—a fanciful vision typical of Disney. The mice and the birds salvage dressmaking materials from between the sleeping cat's claws and patch together an evening gown for their girl in a pair of action spectacles that rival the fairy godmother's subsequent magic. The sections with the king and his minion are a little dull—as they are in *Sleeping Beauty*.

But *Cinderella* outpaces *Sleeping Beauty*. Its comic timing is sharper, its storytelling more effective, its drawings more interesting. Three directors supervised 300 artists who worked for six years in 1,500 hues and used up more than a million pencils to produce 76 minutes of color, movement and fantasy. They would



Sew It Goes: Poor Cinderella's rodent chums whip up a marvelous ball gown in the Disney classic.



The King and I:

John Lone and Joan Chen play the adult Pu Yi and Wan Jung (above); Richard Vuu (right), as the imperial tyke, gazes on his subjects.



have toiled in vain if the video transfer weren't up to snuff, but it, too, meets Disney's usual high standards. *Cinderella* is a treat for animation buffs and good fun for kids. Recommended without reservation.

—Mark Fleischmann

The Last Emperor

1987. John Lone, Joan Chen, Peter O'Toole; co-wr./dir. Bernardo Bertolucci. 164m. (PG-13) Hi ss cc \$89.98. Nelson. Image: excel.

On the surface, *The Last Emperor* glows with stunning visual snazz—it is exactly the type of movie that traditionally snags the Academy Award for best picture. But it also copped Oscars for best director, cinematography, art direction, original score, screenplay, sound, costume design and editing, putting it right up there with *Ben Hur* and *West Side Story* for across-the-board appeal. Most of the acting is superior as well, and it's surprising that even more statues weren't bestowed upon it.

Bertolucci's government-sanctioned biography of Pu Yi (Lone), China's last emperor, does look and sound like the Big Deal it's supposed to be. Indeed, his childhood in the Forbidden City—where he lived as a prisoner of the Chinese republic from 1912 (four years after his coronation at the age of three) until his 1924 expulsion—is an exotic phantasmagoria of opulence and excess. Unfortunately, a great deal of the film's wide-screen splendor is

lost on video. This is a property that screams for letterbox masking.

During his exile in the Manchurian city of Tientsin, Pu Yi attempted to regain his lost throne with the help of the Japanese, who instead used him to further their conquest of Asia. In Tientsin Pu Yi is depicted as an Occident-obsessed playboy, although his steamy relationships with his beautiful wife (Chen) and consort (Wu Jun Mimi) begin to fizzle. In truth, Pu Yi was homosexual, an aspect of his life the Chinese government has censored.

Following World War II, Pu Yi surrendered to Russia. After spending five years in a Siberian labor camp (not seen here), he was turned over to China's Communist government for "remolding through labor and ideological education." At the end of the film, he is a contented gardener who exudes a childlike innocence. In contrast to his youth, Pu Yi's later years seem drab.

Between the frames, *The Last Emperor* is another spectacular and intelligently directed Bertolucci film about psychoanalysis. It is no less fraught with issues of motherhood, confinement and sexuality than *Last Tango in Paris* or *Luna*. Oddly enough, the story Pu Yi tells in his autobiography is much stranger and more interesting than the one seen here. Whether the producers or the Chinese government were responsible for smoothing the edges is impossible to determine. For all its traditional aspects, however, *The Last Emperor* is still a remarkable achievement.

—Richard Gehr

Cop

1988. James Woods, Lesley Ann Warren, Charles Durning, Charles Haid; dir. James B. Harris. 110m. (R) Hi cc V \$89.95. B \$29.95. Paramount. Image: good.

Best Seller

1987. James Woods, Brian Dennehy, Victoria Tennant; dir. John Flynn. 95m. (R) St cc \$89.98. Vestron. LV CX \$36.95. Image. V image: good.

Certain actors seem to enjoy a state of grace which allows them to subsidize legitimate careers in respectable films by appearing in grade-Z movies. For years Donald Sutherland was the king of this bilateral approach to acting. But the new king of the double standard seems to be James Woods. *Salvador* clearly established Woods as a significant talent. And he seems to be taken very seriously by the Hollywood establishment as a money-making hunk. But when it comes to earning his pocket money, if James Woods doesn't learn to distinguish between dumb, sleazy crap and boring dumb, sleazy crap like *Cop* and *Best Seller*, he may be in the slime for good.

Cop introduces him as the obsessive Sergeant Lloyd Hopkins, Dirty Harry without the charm. Hopkins is on the trail of a serial killer whose motivation is somehow tied in with a feminist poet (Warren) and a wacked-out patrolman (Haid). While it's impossible to discuss the plot without giving too much away, be warned that I

Theatrical Releases



Cover Boys: Brian Dennehy (left) and James Woods discover some dangers of authorship in 'Best Seller.'

viewed this sitting next to a dozing, eight-months-pregnant woman who still managed to wake up every 15 minutes, cringe, and then predict—accurately—what would happen in the next scene.

Best Seller, on the other hand, is too implausible to be predictable or, for that matter, very interesting. Dennehy plays Dennis Meechum, a pen-wielding cop in the Joseph Wambaugh tradition. The royalties have run out on his one best-seller (a gutsy memoir about a bizarre theft and murder in which the culprits wore Nixon masks) and Meechum seems resigned to one-hit-wonder status. Enter the mysterious Cleve (Woods), a slit-eyed, cold-blooded hit-man whose previous employer just happens to be one of the most powerful men in California—and the owner of one slightly used Nixon mask.

Cleve's just gotten his pink slip and has a grandiose revenge plan. He'll tell all to Meechum, Meechum will get a hot tome out of it and, on publication day, Cleve will have the last laugh. Cleve and Meechum set up an uneasy alliance. But if you think the most powerful man in California is going to take this lying down, well, you're crazier than a James Woods character. *Best Seller* fails mainly because it's hard to enjoy a romping buddy film when one of the buddies is snapping some poor sod's neck every time you look up from your popcorn.

Good actors in bad films aren't unusual. They're a tradition. But so is bamboo under the fingernails. Wake up, Jim. It's time to go straight for a while.

—John Walker

Frantic

1988. Harrison Ford, Betty Buckley, Emmanuelle Seigner, John Mahoney; co-wr./dir. Roman Polanski. 120m. (R) Hi ss cc \$89.95. LV CX ss \$39.98. Warner. V image: good.

If you look carefully, you'll notice Roman Polanski's upraised middle finger in nearly every shot of *Frantic*, the enforced expatriate's latest venture into mainstream cinema. And that irreverence is what gives *Frantic* more significance than one would expect in this run-of-the-mill (albeit exquisitely photographed) thriller.

Ford and Buckley are Dr. and Mrs. Richard Walker, a comfortably married couple touching down in gay Paris for a medical convention. Jet-lagged, they check into their posh hotel and one-two-three things happen. First, they discover that they've picked up the wrong suitcase. Second, the good doctor takes a shower. Third, Mrs. Walker disappears. Now, there's nothing wrong with disappearing or taking a shower. But let's face it, if the world's baggage clerks were more vigilant, countless films would just flicker and die.

As you've probably guessed, there is a connection between "le luggage" and the vanishing wife. And from there on, *Frantic* merely lives up to its title as Dr. Walker reluctantly joins forces with a mini-skirted smuggler to facilitate the swap of the coveted contraband for a return to marital bliss. What gives *Frantic* a wee bit of spar-

kle is the way Polanski puts a continental spin on Ford's portrayal of the classic Hitchcockian naïf. Though his attitude is passed off as single-mindedness, Dr. Walker seems mighty tolerant of his leggy cohort's unorthodox tactics.

The main problem with *Frantic*'s architecture is that the highly coveted Mrs. is on the screen for less time than it takes to wolf down a continental breakfast. Take away the presumed sanctity of marital possessiveness and you have all the depth of Timmy looking for Lassie in the Place de Pigalle.

But it's the attitudes which send Dr. Walker out on his own that seem to concern Polanski. Every other American he encounters is either a bureaucratic neanderthal or a loutish tourist eyeing the doctor's Parisian adventures with a lurid wink. The French characters are more human and sympathetic, yet project a strong sense that Americans will never really comprehend their way of looking at life.

—John Walker

Planes, Trains & Automobiles

1987. Steve Martin, John Candy; wr./pr./dir. John Hughes. 93m. (R) Hi St cc V \$89.95. B \$29.95. LV \$34.95. Paramount. V image: good.

Nobody with half a brain would call *Planes, Trains & Automobiles* a milestone for either Steve Martin or John Candy, but



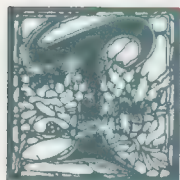
High Tension:

With the help of Emmanuelle Seigner (above), a 'Frantic' Harrison Ford (right) tries to rescue his kidnapped wife in Paris.



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Best of Enemies: Steve Martin (left) and John Candy become companions in 'Planes, Trains & Automobiles.'

there's still something to be said for its agreeable mediocrity. John Hughes strives for obvious yucks in this comedy of opposite strangers thrown together by circumstances and, at least until the cornball ending, he hits the target, if not the bull's-eye. This determinedly madcap romp offers plenty of solid low humor. But be warned that you're likely to come away feeling dumber than before.

The premise is classic odd couple stuff, with uptight marketing executive Neal Page (Martin) and slob shower-curtain-seller salesman Del Griffith (Candy) sharing an ill-fated journey marked by one disaster after another. They're supposed to fly from New York to Chicago in time for Thanksgiving, but snow strands them in Wichita, Kansas (pictured here as only slightly better than hell). In rapid succession, they share a tiny bed at a cheesy motel, ride in the back of a pickup truck during a snowstorm, take a train which promptly breaks down, catch a bus, grab a rental car which they accidentally incinerate and so forth.

Tiring? You bet. Besides piling on too many episodes, Hughes doesn't give Martin nearly enough to do. Mostly he looks exasperated (shades of John Cleese in *Clockwise*, which this film resembles) as the stuffed shirt who can't abide his vulgar companion. Still, Martin can squeeze laughs from the most meager situations, whether stalking a taxi or trying to charge a motel room with a charred credit card. Candy has an easier time, playing the jolly lout for all he's worth. In one brilliant moment, he mimes wildly to a Ray Charles song instead of keeping his hands on the wheel of a car, an interlude that's both hilarious and hair-raising.

While *Planes, Trains & Automobiles*

might seem to be Hughes' departure from teen sagas, Neal and Del are really just adolescent boys in grown-up clothes. As in *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, the characters arrive at a moment of self-realization after their comic odyssey. Here, Neal makes the startling discovery that he really likes the low-rent Del after all, inviting the lonely guy into his suburban home for Thanksgiving dinner. Such heavy sentimentality comes as a jolt but doesn't diminish the fun of the mindless chaos that precedes it.

—Jon Young

Gates of Heaven

1978. Pr./dir. Errol Morris. 85m. (NR) V only. Hi \$79.95. RCA/Columbia. Image: good.

This low-key, low-budget documentary about a Southern California pet cemetery does not, on its face, promise much in entertainment value. Essentially a series of talking-head interviews with the cemetery's founder, customers and managers, *Gates*' payoff is its provocativeness, as it urges one to wonder why, for instance,

some people love their pets more than their own families.

The most ambiguously touching moments of the movie—highly praised in its theatrical run—involve the pet owners and their reminiscences of the unequal relationship that death has halted. That relationship is summed up on more than a few headstones: "For Fido, who gave so much love and asked for nothing in return."

There's more ambiguity from the cemetery's founder, the very picture of decency, who reaches for the words to explain the roots of his inspiration. Poignantly inarticulate, he makes much of the fact that his dear departed collie could walk behind him "and he'd never attack me, he'd never bite me." As opposed to what people would do, one is led to conclude.

Morris passively pokes fun at his countrified subjects and the O'Neillian hick burg in which they live. He does so in a mendacious, Capote-esque and ultimately affectionate style, allowing the characters time to reveal themselves—to hang themselves, as it were—and then deftly cross-cutting from one principal's comment to another, with a kind of smug irony and humor as the intended effect. In doing so, *Gates* becomes not a documentary but a commentary. It just looks like the former.

Morris also razzes the cemetery's businessmen, who, with their home-grown power of positive thinking, make a going concern out of a divine whimsy. A salesperson pitches the "Garden of Honor" for police dogs and seeing eye dogs "killed in the line of duty"—they rest for free. Less heroic animals who wish to share this hallowed ground must pay a special premium for the privilege.

—Mary Allen



Pets in Peace:

Errol Morris' camera excavates a California cemetery in his wry documentary, 'Gates of Heaven.'



Trading Places: Kirk Cameron and Dudley Moore do the transference bit in 'Like Father Like Son.'

Like Father Like Son

1987. Dudley Moore, Kirk Cameron, Margaret Colin, Sean Astin; dir. Rod Daniel. 101m. (PG-13) Hi ss \$89.95. RCA/Columbia. LV St CX \$36.95. Image. V image: good.

Kirk Cameron, the pubescent idol of ABC's *Growing Pains*, couldn't be more at home in the first feature film. Canned joke for contrivance, the movie plays exactly like a television comedy, which in this case isn't such a bad thing. Energetic familiarity gives *Like Father Like Son* its laughs, as precocious teen and stuffy adult are thrown into each other's clichés: Dad must face the school bully while Junior gets the gold card.

This bizarre (except in Hollywood, it seems) switch occurs when brilliant surgeon Jack (Moore) accidentally drinks a "brain transference serum" and finds himself in the body of a son who cares more about girls than medical school. After grounding himself, Chris (Cameron) sets off to do brilliantly on his bio exams and ruin his reputation with snottiness. But when Jack is caught playing basketball by the crafty hospital administrator, the little big man is forced to apply his ignorance of medicine to patients and lack of social graces to the boss' lascivious wife.

The two stars make this sitcom switch as funny as expected, but the film fails to place them in anything but predictable comic situations. And rather than taking a knowing look at the transformations from both adult and adolescent eyes (as Judge Reinhold's *Vice Versa* does), this is teen fantasy all the way.

—Daniel Schweiger

Theatrical Releases

Consuming Passions

1988. Vanessa Redgrave, Jonathan Pryce, Tyler Butterworth, Sammi Davis; dir. Giles Foster. 98m. (R) Hi ss \$79.95. Virgin. LV CX \$36.95. Image. V image: good.

If you like your comedy vanilla flavor, *Consuming Passions* may not be your choice for dessert. But if you like it as dark as Hershey's bittersweet chocolate, you're sure to agree that this is the most wickedly funny piece of British cinema to come down the pike in years.

Ian Littleton's (Butterworth) first act as the newest employee of Chumley's Chocolate is to accidentally dump three hapless employees into a swirling vat of molten chocolate. Quicker than you can chomp an M&M, the poor buggers are homogenized and exit this mortal coil in the form of Passionelles, a heretofore tasteless and nutritionless product that epitomizes Chumley's product under the supervision of its slimy new CEO, Mr. Farris (Pryce). Purity is not a priority with Farris, but the idea of a batch of chocolates so grossly polluted shocks the company figurehead into action. With the abashed Littleton as chauffeur, the elder chocolatier makes a run after his reputation. But after a disastrous attempt to buy up the suspect edibles from their various points of distribution, during which he irritably points out that Ian has "turned the population of Pottersea into cannibals," it transpires that this new blend is quite popular with the sweet-toothed locals. As Farris opines, "Every blunder is a chance to grow."

And so Littleton finds himself instantly promoted, with corporate responsibilities

that include everything from bribing "chocolate widow" Mrs. Garza (Redgrave) with romance to coming up with a viable substitute for the new ingredient. And the short of it is, well....there is no substitute.

Consuming Passions is easily the best post-Python work that Michael Palin and Terry Jones (authors of the original play) have inspired and, unlike Britain's more dour comedy exports of recent years, boasts a sugar-rush of energy not seen since the glory days of Peter Sellers and Terry-Thomas. Here's one video you won't put back in the box half-chewed!

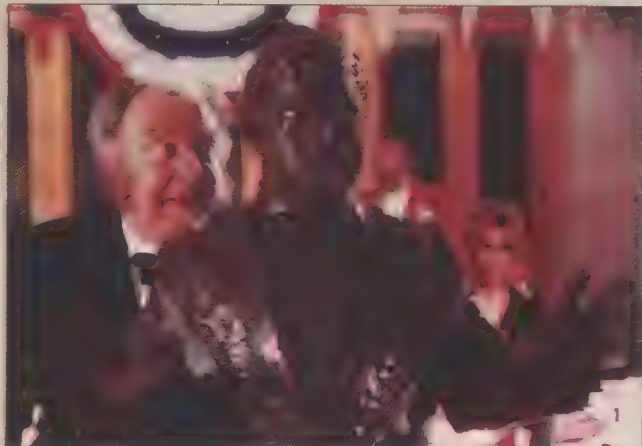
—John Walker

Dudes

1988. Jon Cryer, Daniel Roebuck, Lee Ving, Catherine Mary Stewart; dir. Penelope Spheeris. 90m. (R) Hi \$89.95. IVE. Image: excel.

Penelope Spheeris' previous fiction films and documentaries—including *The Decline of Western Civilization* (both punk and heavy metal), *Suburbia* and *The Boys Next Door* (underrated and worth checking out)—were all informed by an insider's respect for Southern California's youth subculture and cockeyed humor. Both are totally absent from *Dudes*, her first outright cartoon.

A dud on every level, *Dudes* is an MTV-flavored surreal Western involving three New York punk caricatures who drive to California because "everything's totally fucked." As far as this video is concerned, they're correct. Traveling through the West, they run into a murderous band whose leader (dementedly acted by former



Soft Centers:

Freddie Jones (left) plays a chocolate baron in the morbid British comedy 'Consuming Passions.'

Fear singer Lee Ving) kills one of the kids (played by Flea, a member of the Red Hot Chili Peppers). Assisted by a foxy gas station attendant, a friendly Elvis impersonator and some hallucinated cowboys and Indians, the remaining two dudes (Roebuck, the lumpy guy who murdered his girlfriend in *River's Edge*, and Cryer) find their lives' meaning in the ensuing search-and-destroy mission.

Cryer, who continually seems on the verge of either tears or violent retching, ruins the film from the start. Spheeris fills the void he creates with a soundtrack combining awful punk rock with unlistenable heavy metal. Now that she's learned how to make a movie that looks nice, it's unfortunate Spheeris didn't turn her craft on its spikey head once again, dig up a stupid-fresh script and film some really beautiful southern California ugliness. As she well knows, it's out there.

—Richard Gehr



Pioneer Punks: Flea, Jon Cryer and Daniel Roebuck tangle with some real bad guys in 'Dudes.'

Promised Land

1988. Kiefer Sutherland, Jason Gedrick, Meg Ryan, Tracy Pollan; wr./dir. Michael Hoffman. 105m. (R) St \$89.98. Vestron. LV CX St \$36.95. Image. V image: good.

Across America, countless high school graduations are celebrated with the enthusiasm of feel-good movies. Youth is equated with hope and power, as students are breathlessly assured of prosperous futures and the opportunity to reshape the universe. *Promised Land* offers the sodden reality: most teenagers instead discover aimlessness, bitterly reliving their shattered dreams in the encroaching confines of small towns.

Such a fate befalls three classmates from Ashville High. Two years after be-



No Pryor Restraint: As an exasperated homeowner, Richard Pryor loses his cool in a 'Moving' nightmare.

coming the local hero for a winning basketball shot—then losing a college scholarship and taking a nowhere policeman's job—Davey Hancock (Gedrick) continues to exist only in that final championship game. The last solace left to him is shooting guns and spying on ex-girlfriend Mary (Pollan), who has returned home from college to ponder the course of her life. Thousands of miles away, class nerd Danny Rivers (Sutherland) roams the badlands with his self-destructive wife (Ryan). When he decides to drive back to Ashville for Christmas, the couples begin an inexorable course to a tragic collision.

Based on a true story and punctuated by hollow Presidential speeches, *Promised Land* is a bitter attack on the stifled humanitarianism of the Reagan era, where senseless machismo triumphs over sensitivity. But the film expresses its viewpoint in poignant relationships: the characters of all these wasted youths are well developed and affecting, particularly Gedrick's tortured, self-centered sports washout and Ryan's wild child, who reacts violently to conformist pressure.

For its solemn material, the film is deeply romantic. Though writer/director Hoffman sees America as the land of broken promises, he provides dazzling vistas where the blighted young adults entwine in love. But neither does he give in to sentimentality: the shocking conclusion hits like a thunderbolt. While most movies about teens refuse to surrender their escapist optimism, *Promised Land* is all the more refreshing for its truthful and poetic downbeat tone. —Daniel Schweiger

Moving

1988. Richard Pryor, Beverly Todd, Randy Quaid; dir. Alan Metter. 89m. (R) Hi ss cc \$89.95 LV CX ss \$34.98. Warner. V image: good.

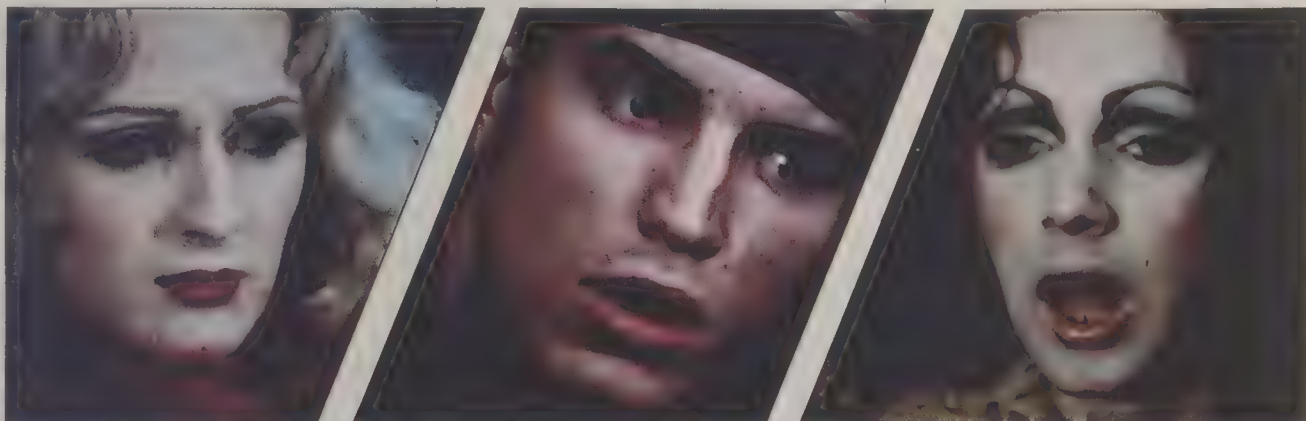
Moving doesn't really break out of the Pryor-was-funny-but-the-movie-wasn't rut to which his fans have become accustomed, but it's a warm-spirited film with solid performances and more than a few unexpected laughs. Pryor plays Arlo Pear, an unemployed engineer in New Jersey who lands a dream job in Boise, Idaho. The cross-country move brings about Job-like hardships as Arlo and his family cope with the transition. Unfortunately, the Pears' surprise setbacks aren't very surprising.

Randy Quaid leads a top-notch supporting cast as the deliciously unhinged, larger-than-life next door neighbor with a surrealistically monstrous lawnmower. Additional comic assistance comes from Dave Thomas, Morris Day, Rodney Dangerfield and Dana Carvey (not to mention Ji Tu Cumbuka, Robert LaSardo and mountainous pro wrestler King Kong Bundy as the world's scariest movers). Flipper the family dog may become a cult star among pet owners as the classically inanimate sleeps-round-the-clock suburban pooch. When they determine that Flipper is still alive, the Pears pack him up for Boise, too.

Moving bears the outward signs of diverting family comedy, but Pryor, at the center of his domestic fiasco, never seems to interact with his family. Pryor's low-key mugging is done in a vacuum. Viewers may need more breathing room next time.

—Drew Wheeler

Theatrical Releases



Yesterday's Superstars: Candy Darling (left), Joe Dallesandro (center) and Holly Woodlawn appear in 'Flesh,' 'Trash,' 'Heat' and numerous other Andy Warhol films.

Flesh

1968. Joe Dallesandro, Geraldine Smith, Patti D'Arbanville; dir. Paul Morrissey. 90m. (NR) \$59.95. B \$29.95. Mystic Fire/Paramount. Image: good.

Trash

1970. Dallesandro, Holly Woodlawn, Jane Forth; dir. Morrissey. 110m. (NR) \$59.95. B \$29.95. Mystic Fire/Paramount. Image: good.

Heat

1972. Dallesandro, Sylvia Miles, Eric Emerson; dir. Morrissey. 102m. (NR) \$59.95. B \$29.95. Mystic Fire/Paramount. Image: good.

"Andy Warhol Presents..." For years the mention of Andy Warhol and movies in one sentence conjured up cinematic images which defied the audience not to yawn. Static shots of the Empire State Building that lasted for hours. Entire sleep cycles captured in black & white. Even one of Andy's celebrated "talkies," *Chelsea Girls*, took the better part of a day to endure. But once comfortable with the notion that a concept could qualify as art regardless of execution, art fans chomped their popcorn and squinted at the screen with grudging respect. Warhol introduced the notion of art "once-removed"—rubber-stamping his monicker on images filched from Sears catalogues or cloned by an army of underlings—and it followed that his name would appear on cinematic ventures for which he did virtually nothing.

Flesh, *Trash* and *Heat* comprise a diffuse trilogy by Warhol's most talented cinematographer, Paul Morrissey. An in-

tense cinema buff, Morrissey drifted into a solid orbit within the Warhol cosmos and began writing, directing and shooting features that would represent Warhol in the realm of "commercial" motion pictures. *Flesh*, a smash on the art-house circuit in 1968, presents a day in the life of a young male hustler who supports a wife and a light drug habit by supplying friendship and fantasy to solvent homosexuals. Joe Dallesandro, a sort of human found object (and the "Little Joe" who "never once gave it away" in Lou Reed's "Walk on the Wild Side") offers an alternative to the general political rhetoric of the era with his advice to a would-be teen hustler: "It's not a matter of being straight or...being *not* straight. You just do whatever you have to do."

Two years down the road, *Trash* finds Dallesandro with a heavier drug habit. Mirroring the fascination of the rich with the "trash" scene Warhol exploited so well, *Trash* follows a string of rich kids and dilettantes trying to coax Joe out of his junkie impotence. The improvised dialogue is interspersed with more obviously scripted material that is often darkly hilarious. (A prehistoric yuppie wife whines to her husband, "We promised to do things *together*, so help me!") Help her carry the overdosed Dallesandro out of their apartment, that is.)

Heat features Dallesandro and real actress Sylvia Miles chewing the California palms in a self-conscious parody of *Sunset Boulevard*. Though lacking the power and grim charm of its predecessors, *Heat* is the logical conclusion of Morrissey's grand experiment, revealing a director who treasures the sheen of Hollywood celluloid over

the seedy grit of New York. Although both *Flesh* and *Trash* were financial successes, *Heat* reflected a shift to more comfortable commercialism: all sex, no drugs.

Morrissey and Warhol went on to tackle several more ventures (*Dracula* and *Frankenstein* among them); Morrissey "alone" even made a *Hound of the Baskervilles* parody with Peter Cook and Dudley Moore. But *Flesh*, *Trash* and *Heat* sum up an art form, an era and the ultimate scam in one fell swoop. They're art. They're history. They're on videotape. And now they're money in Andy Warhol's estate. Somewhere up in heaven, you know that Andy must be very pleased. —John Walker

Heaven

1987. Color/B&W. Dir. Diane Keaton. 88m. \$79.95. Pacific Arts. LV St CX \$36.95. Image. Vimage: good.

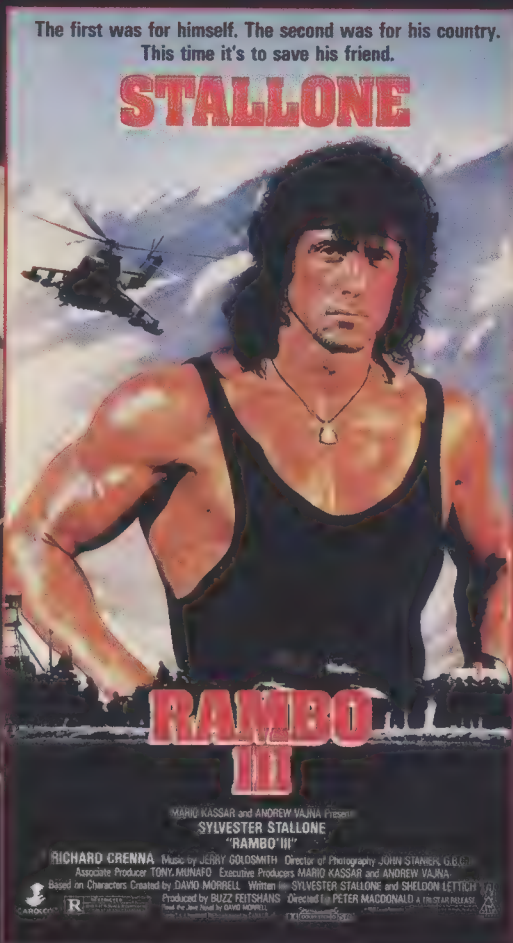
Diane Keaton's oddball documentary surveys people's differing conceptions of life after death in a patchwork of interview snippets. Most opinions offered are terribly pretentious and, although a few people show some real-life humor, far fewer show any glimmer of insight. Interviews are interspersed with ludicrous archival Hollywood versions of paradise, including parts of the David Niven film *Stairway to Heaven* and the black musical, *Cabin in the Sky*. The weird clips, as well as "heavenly" background music, stuttered dialogue and other soundtrack jokery only serve to lampoon the serious spiritual ideas the interviewees try to express. *Heaven* may have been intended to amuse, but it certainly does not enlighten. —Drew Wheeler

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Kidvid

In search of excellence

BY MARIANNE MEYER

Movie rentals may forever remain video stores' basic business, but more and more kidvid is going home permanently. The pricing of children's titles—often at \$20 or less—makes the purchase of a tape that may be watched dozens of times a lot more economical than its repeated rental. Rental does offer a low-cost opportunity to see if your child wants a particular tape added to the family library, but those that pass juvenile muster tend to get bought outright rather than re-rented.

"Kids like what is familiar," observes Joanne Singer, director of children's media for New Video, a Manhattan retail chain. "Once children see a tape, they want to watch it over and over again."

Such repetition, which might seem unnatural—or at least monotonous—to a parent, may actually benefit a child. Sandra Calvert, professor of psychology at

Georgetown University, says that familiarity with favorite videos, as with books, adds to a child's feeling of comfort and stability, and repetition helps develop certain skills. "Until about age nine," Calvert explains, "children lack some cognitive abilities that allow them to fully understand stories—things like connections between events, or people's motivations. The ability to go back and watch something over and over again helps them develop these cognitive skills and better understand the story."

Repetition can also counter youngsters' feelings that so much of life is out of their hands. "If you know what's going to happen in a story, you feel like you're in control," Calvert continues. "Children love to tell you what's going to happen next. It allows them to feel competent and confident."

When it comes to selecting videos that are worth owning, it pays to be an informed

parent. Reviews can point toward quality efforts, giving an indication of content that isn't always apparent from the boxes on store shelves. Check book stores for reference books on kidvid titles (usually in the movies/TV section) which can direct you to commendable series and older classics, offering summaries and appraisals on past hits and misses.

There are also newsletters and publications specifically aimed at kidvid purchasers. The bi-monthly *Children's Video Report* reviews roughly two dozen new releases each issue and offers insider reports on the field. The newsletter is aimed at schools and libraries (ask at your local branch), but the one- to four-star scores are worth noting. The publishers of *Children's Video*, a monthly magazine, also produce an annual buying guide on the genre. The newsletter issued by Parents' Choice, the Massachusetts-based media watchdog group, covers video as well as records, books and computer software. Both Parents' Choice and Action for Children's Television give annual awards to video programs, so look for tapes that have earned their approval.

After you've read the reviews and consulted the experts, from Parents' Choice to opinionated Aunt Mabel, suppose you still haven't decided what's a good buy. Or say you're buying a last-minute gift and don't have time for in-depth consultations. Check the package, especially the look of the cover. One can't say that a pretty package always holds a good tape, but the converse is often true—if a tape is shoddily packaged, don't expect much from the program. The box might tell you if the tape has received any educational endorsements, or it may carry an age-range listing.

Remember, though, such ratings tend to err on the broad side. A tape marked "ages 3-7" may hold little interest for your six-and-a-half-year-old. Carol Rosenstein, producer of the acclaimed *Kidsongs* series, suggests you aim high rather than low. "Younger kids seem to tag along with the older kids, but the older kids will label something babyish and not watch it." Always take into account your child's own sensitivities. A two-year-old with separation anxiety does not want to watch *Dumbo* being taken from his mother, even if his six-year-old sister loves the film.

Some stores will let you take a quick



Kidvid

look at a prospective purchase. Singer, for example, keeps a small playback monitor in her stores to let parents preview tapes for animation quality or subject matter. It's not something she expects all retailers can do, but she stresses that parents can and should ask questions when they shop.

Okay, so you've decided to buy some quality kidvid. You've made your choice and you rush down to the video store to find that the only titles for sale are *Top Gun* and used copies of *The Terminator*. Kidvid is very different from theatrical feature sales. It's hard to predict the big hits; few titles get the same promotional and publicity support from manufacturers. Furthermore, kidvid tapes have low profit margins and it's difficult to keep track of new releases. Would you recognize Bert and Ernie if you didn't have a toddler? How about picking the winner in a cartoon series that's spawned a dozen titles?

Don't stop at local video stores, either. Kidvid is frequently distributed through toy stores or specialty shops that cater to parents and kids and there, too, a store that gets your business on a regular basis might make special orders for you.

If you're still stuck, consider one of the video mail/phone order services. Listening Library (800-243-4504) has "access to almost anything published" for children, according to a spokesman, and will send a catalogue to prove it if you call. New Video takes phone orders nationwide (800-431-2299) and has a general catalogue with astute reviews of kidvid. S.I. Video (800-228-5002), another general-interest video sales outfit, also has good kidvid variety.

One last suggestion—allow your child some input. You want to avoid giving a carte blanche signal that results in yet another safe, familiar and uninspiring licensed-product tape, but it pays to involve your children in the process. Calvert suggests you make a preliminary choice of two or three tapes and then let the child decide which to take home. This provides a structure for viewing while still giving children some control. "Parents can also stress diversity and expand their children's viewing by letting them have a tape they're familiar with and then offering a choice from some new ones," says Calvert. If you watch with your children, you can help them through the initial viewing as they establish familiarity with a new program."



Sue Zaliouk and the Fundance Kids

1987. 45m. \$19.95. Family Express. Image: good. Ages 4 to 10.

Dancer/instructor Zaliouk once performed with the London Royal Ballet, and her home exercise program for kids devotes a full section to traditional ballet poses and movements. Other segments find her, with an energetic cast of kids, cavorting in outdoor settings to a soundtrack full of percussion sound effects that correspond to body movements. Her delivery is a bit quirky, alternating between insufferably perky and faintly pretentious, but the exercises are solid and the mood upbeat, so there's a good bet youngsters will get into the show's healthy spirit.

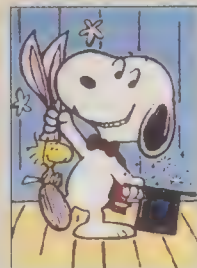
Charlie Brown's All-Stars

Yr. n.a. anim. 28m. \$14.95. Hi-Tops. Image: excel. Ages 2 to 8.

It's Magic, Charlie Brown

Yr. n.a. anim. 28m. \$14.95. Hi-Tops. Image: excel. Ages 2 to 8.

When a child falls in love with a video series, the parent who sits through countless repetitions is likely to go mad unless the programs are extraordinarily well



Dancing, Entrancing: Sue Zaliouk works out with the Fundance Kids (left); Snoopy (above) learns prestidigitation in 'It's Magic, Charlie Brown.'

done. Charlie and the Peanuts gang stand the test of time—theirs is a class act, full of strong visual humor, evolving characterizations, warmth and creativity. In these two new video releases, Charlie turns down new baseball uniforms rather than dismiss the dog and girls on his team. On the second tape, Snoopy learns only enough magic to make Charlie disappear but not to bring him back. Both are a delight and, unlike watching them on CBS, you won't have to sit through risqué *Falcon Crest* commercials.

The Flintstones Meet the Jetsons

1987. anim. 100m. \$29.95. Worldvision. Image: good. Ages 4 to 10.

It's bad enough that Fred and Barney complain about their wives while Wilma and Betty scheme to con their husbands into a vacation. At least George and Jane Jetson are more outwardly affectionate. When, due to a time machine, space age and stone age cultures clash, Fred uses George's advanced technology to cheat at the company picnic. Nice example for the kids, eh? Actual commercial messages—for two brands of cereal—before and after this feature-length flop are the last straw. Parents who knowingly bring home kidvid with blatant product spots deserve no home video alternative to Saturday morning TV.

E.T. Hotline

E.T. Phone Now!

800/431-2299 Toll Free Out of State

212/475-7400 In New York State

Mon - Sat 10am- 10pm /Sun 1pm- 9pm Eastern Time

SALE

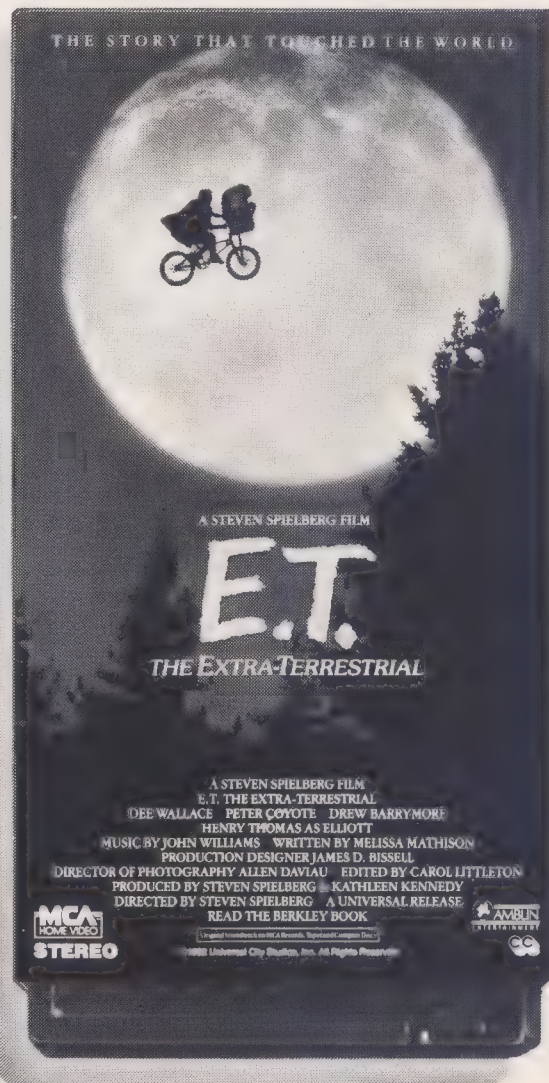
\$21⁹⁵ Your final cost only
\$16⁹⁵



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 Your order will be shipped with a \$5.00 rebate form. Pepsi-Cola purchase required.

Free Bonus

Included with each purchase will be a new New Video Fall Catalog featuring over 500 new releases and listings of thousands of movies & tapes. A \$3.95 value.



Yes, I want my own E.T. and even a few for my friends and family. Please fill my order and send it to me, fast, on the *World Home Video Premiere* date of October 27, 1988.

NEW VIDEO

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METHOD OF PAYMENT ☐ CHECK or M. O.
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Sorry No C.O.D.'s or Cash.

Credit Card Number _____

Exp Date _____

Signature _____
(Required for Credit Card Purchases)

Please ship ☐ UPS ☐ Parcel Post

QTY	VHS	BETA	PRICE	TOTAL
			\$21.95 EA.	\$
8 1/4% Sales tax (N.Y. Res. only)				
Shipping/Handling/Insurance				\$4.50
TOTAL				\$

Name _____
 C/O _____
 Street _____
 City State Zip _____

VIDEO RETAILERS

Have trouble finding copies of VIDEO at your local newsstand? Want to know where to send a friend to pick up a copy? The following will help—it's a list of retail stores across the country, that carry VIDEO every month.

ARIZONA

Satellite Center, Casa Grande
Patagonia Video, Patagonia

ARKANSAS

Video Vision, Monticello
On The Square, Marianna
Video Productions, Melbourne

CALIFORNIA

Video Journeys, Los Angeles
Video Archives, Manhattan Beach
M&P Video, Long Beach
Video Terminal, Pasadena
Todays Video, Azusa
M-G-C Productions, Vista
Onune Video Inc. #1, Brawley
Online Video Inc. #2, El Centro
Video Mart Inc., San Bernardino
C & W Video, Camarillo
Unique Video, Tulane
Home Movies to Go, Grove City
Home Movies to Go, Santa Maria
Home Movie To Go, Santa Maria
Video Affairs, Belmont
Dr. Video, San Francisco
Video Plus, Concord
Video Room Inc., Oakland
Pick A Flick Video, Cupertino
American Video Center, Milpitas
Video Box Office, Scotts Valley
Tower Magazines, West Sacramento
Tower Video, Sacramento
Penn Valley Video, Penn Valley

COLORADO

Shays Auto Service, Saquache
Picaflic, Avon

CONNECTICUT

National Video, Avon
Movies And More, Manchester
Video Galaxy X, Enfield
Linda Galanis, Southbury
Video Movies of Brookfield, Brookfield

DELAWARE

Dover Video, Dover
Towne Video, Fenwick Island
The Video Shop Inc., Milford
Towne Video, Milford
Towne Video, Rehoboth Beach

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Video Biz, Washington

FLORIDA

Everything Video, Tallahassee
The Video Experience, Altamonte Spring
Cinemasters, Sanford
National Home Video, Tavares
Variety Records & Video, Miami
Video Connection, Miami
Sebasco Inc., Miami
Video Station, Riviera Beach
American Video Express, Stuart
Video X Tron of Stuart Inc., Stuart
Video Empire, Palm Harbor
Video Biz, Sarasota
Video Corner, St. Petersburg
Video Biz, Ft. Myers

GEORGIA

Home Video, Duluth
Hi Fi Buys, Atlanta
Home Video, Dunwoody
Video Plus, Jefferson
Crawford TV & Video, Dalton

HAWAII

Jack Wada Electronics, Lihue
Paradise Video Inc., Wailuku

ILLINOIS

State Electronic, Mount Prospect
Laser Audio Video Inc, Park Ridge
Video Hotline, Winnetka
Westchester Video, Westchester
B & B Video, Carol Stream
Georgetown Video, Woodale
Video Basics Inc., Joliet
Video In Motion Inc., Aurora
Randall Drug, Naperville
Countryside Home Video, Countryside
Video Sixty Six, Countryside
The Video Source, Chicago
Arkavark Video, Cicero
Lorrys Book Store, Chicago
Video House Rock Island

INDIANA

Mr. Video East, Carmel
Video Biz, Portage

IOWA

Pick A Show Video, Council Bluff
Toronto Video, Toronto

KANSAS

Duncan's Movie, Magic, Topeka

KENTUCKY

Home Video, Louisville
Video Station, Luursville
Video Fantastic, Richmond
Classic Videos, Henderson

LOUISIANA

Video Biz, Metairie
Video Biz of Slidell, Slidell

MAINE

Video Store, Auburn

MARYLAND

Video Tek Inc., Temple Hills
Video Store, Silver Springs
Columbia Video Center, Columbia
Greetings & Readings, Towson

MASSACHUSETTS

Sounds Easy Video
Video Dimensions, Southbridge
Ashby Video, Ashby
Movie Loft, Framingham
Video Revolution, Andover
Act 1 Video Inc., Dracut
Video Connection, Saugus
Family Flicks Unlimited, Amesbury
Video Biz Northshore, Gloucester
Action Video, Salem
Video Odyssey, Boston
Avenue Video, Malden
Video Biz, Needham
National Video, North Dartmouth

MICHIGAN

Rainy Day Video Inc., East Detroit
Rentertainment, East Detroit
Video Unlimited, Marysville
TSV Video, Sterling Hgts.
Starburst Video, St. Clair Shores
Video Master, Ann Arbor
Your Nephews Video, Plymouth
A Bookstore & More, Midland
A Book Store & More, Midland
Premier Video, Grand Rapids

MINNESOTA

Video Express LTD, Duluth

MISSISSIPPI

C & M Video Sales, Forest

MISSOURI

Video Castle Stores, Kirksville

MONTANA

Video Station, Bozeman

NEBRASKA

NEVADA

Video Plus, Reno
National Video, Las Vegas

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Video Station, Amherst
Movie Loft, Hudson
Home Video Shop, Seabrook

NEW JERSEY

Video Plus, Cliffside Park
C & B Video Palace
Take One Video, Hoboken
Video Access, North Bergen
Video Land Inc., Parsippany
Hi-Tech Images, Union City
Mac's Video Center, Jersey City
Ramapo Video Image, Wayne
Copeland Enterprises Inc., Red Bank
Ippys, Howell
Act One Video, East Hanover
Family Video Center, Marmora
Risley Video Center, Millville
Yorktowne Video, Lakewood
Ippys, Manesquan
Video Exchange, Pt. Pleasant
Pik A Flick Co., Toms River
Everything In Video, Parlin

NEW YORK

New Video, New York
Rare Bird Video, New York
Video Stop Inc., New York
Giffen Video Corp., Staten Island
Video Investors Inc., Staten Island
Video Connection of Riverdale David Cutie, Riverdale
Bay Electronics, Bronx
Naber-Hood Video, Riverdale
Star Video, Larchmont
Video Scope, Middletown
3C Video, Monroe
Future Video, New Hyde Park
Parkway Video & Electron Mart, Brooklyn
Video Star, Flushing
Video Cinema, Bayside
Future Video, Mineola
Mr. Video, Bayport
Video Breakthrough, Coram
Hollywood Movie Store Ltd., East Setouet
Video Connection of RVC, Rockville Ctr

Movieland USA, Levittown
Castle Video, Lindenhurst
Video Breakthrough, Riverhead
Hampton Video Concepts, East Hampton
Movieland USA, Shirley
Video Breakthrough, Watermill
Pryme Tyme Video, Ballston Spa
A&G Video, Cohoes
American Video, Delmar
Video Wizard, Poughkeepsie
Boob Tube, Liberty
The Video Shack, Aryden
Video World, Johnson City
Video Discount, Binghamton
Video Factory, Buffalo
Video Box Office, Rochester
Video Biz, Fairport

NORTH CAROLINA

Video Connection, Greensboro
News Center In Cary Village, Cary
The Video Shoppe, Cary
Video Channel, Raleigh
National Video, Asheville

OHIO

Five Star Video, Hillard
Video Movie Classics, Columbus
Magic Castle Video, Columbus
Eric Martins, Maple Heights
Video 21, Brecksville
Spectrum Video, Ashland
Video Flicks, St Bernard
Classic Video, Piqua
Dayton Video Inc., Kettering
Video Biz of Lima, Lima
The Video Shack, Ft. Recovery

OKLAHOMA

The Video Library, Mannford
CR Flicks, Muskogee

PENNSYLVANIA

Jacks Video Store, Neville Island
Instant Replay, McKees Rocks
Network Video, Pittsburgh
Instant Replay #2, Pittsburgh
Davidsville Video Hut, Davidsville
Video Flicks, New Castle
Ricks Video Headquarters, LaProbe
Showtime Video, Grove City
Allen Street Video, State College
Mikes Video I, State College
Video Vision Theater, Mount Jay
Video 54 Inc., Lancaster
Rossi Video World, Dickson
West Coast Video, Quakers Town
Video Connection, Quakertown
Videotape Library IX, Philadelphia
West Chester Video, West Chester
Vaccaros Video, Reading
Flying Hills Video, Reading

PUERTO RICO

Fantasies Video Club, Rico Blanco

SOUTH CAROLINA

Crenshaws Inc., Pendleton

SOUTH DAKOTA

Video Pro, Spearfish

TEXAS

Video Studio, Greenville
BG Movies & Rentals, Blooming Grove
Video Trend, Houston
Audio Video Plus, Houston
Video Station, Cedar Park
The Movie Store, Austin

UTAH

Knight Sound, Bountiful

VIRGINIA

Video Station, Alexandria
Video Attractions, Orange
Video Magic, Chester
Lee Hartman & Sons Inc., Roanoke
Action Video, Floyd
Family Video Shop, Bookmeal

WASHINGTON

Video Factory, Everett
Video Depot, Bellingham
Stardust Video, Tacoma

WEST VIRGINIA

Video Station, Huntington

WISCONSIN

Little Buddah Enterprises Ltd., Milwaukee
Planner & CAN'T READ THE REST

CANADA

Basement Video, Pembroke OT
Movie Art Decor, Toronto

Directory

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

Claire's Knee

1971. Jean-Claude Brialy, Aurora Cornu, Beatrice Romand; wr./dir. Eric Rohmer. Funniest of director's six "Moral Tales": diplomat develops obsessive interest in another woman as his wedding day approaches. 106m. (PG) Hi sub. \$59.95. Media.

Cousin, Cousine

1975. Marie-Christine Barrault, Victor Lanoux; wr./dir. Jean-Charles Tacchella. Amiable French farce: two cousins abandon unfaithful spouses and begin passionate affair. 96m. (R) sub. \$29.95. Axon.

Empire of the Sun

1987. Christian Bale, John Malkovich, Miranda Richardson; dir. Steven Spielberg. Opulent adaptation of J.G. Ballard novel: travails of wealthy boy separated from parents in Shanghai at start of WW II. 151m. (PG) Hi ss cc \$89.95. Warner.

Father of the Bride

1950. B&W. Spencer Tracy, Elizabeth Taylor, Joan Bennett; dir. Vincent Minnelli. Delightful comedy of family planning elaborate wedding. 93m. Hi \$19.95. MGM/UA.

The Glass Menagerie

1987. Joanne Woodward, John Malkovich, Karen Allen; dir. Paul Newman. Well-acted version of Tennessee Williams drama. 134m. (PG) Hi V only. \$79.95. MCA.

Good Morning, Vietnam

1987. Robin Williams, Forest Whitaker, Bruno Kirby; dir. Barry Levinson. Williams gives tour de force performance as irreverent disc



Tour of Duty: Robin Williams rocks the airwaves as an irreverent military disc jockey in 'Good Morning, Vietnam.'

jockey fighting with Army brass in Saigon. 119m. (R) Hi ss \$89.95. Touchstone.

The Gunfighter

1950. B&W. Gregory Peck, Helen Westcott, Karl Malden; dir. Henry King. Intelligent western: gunslinger tries to live down his violent past. 85m. Hi \$19.98. Playhouse.

Henry IV

1985. Marcello Mastroianni, Claudia Cardinale; wr./dir. Marco Bellocchio. Fine adaptation of Pirandello play: unrequited love drives

actor to imagine he is a medieval nobleman. 95m. (PG) Hi sub. \$59.95. Media.

Housekeeping

1987. Christine Lahti; wr./dir. Bill Forsyth. Acclaimed comedy about eccentric Canadian who cares for her sister's two orphaned children. 117m. (PG) Hi ss cc \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

Love Me or Leave Me

1955. Doris Day, James Cagney, Cameron Mitchell; dir. Charles Vidor. Brassy Hollywood bio features Day as '20s jazz singer Ruth Etting; Cagney a standout as gangster who backs her career. 122m. Hi St \$19.95. MGM/UA.

The Member of the Wedding

1953. B&W. Julie Harris, Ethel Waters, Brandon De Wilde; dir. Fred Zinnemann. From Carson McCullers play: brother's upcoming marriage spurs girl to maturity. 91m. Hi V only. \$69.95. RCA/Columbia.

Moonstruck

1987. Cher, Nicolas Cage, Olympia Dukakis, Vincent Gardenia; wr. John Patrick Shanley; dir. Norman Jewison. Cher copped Oscar as Brooklyn woman who falls in love with her fiancé's estranged brother. 102m. (PG) Hi ss \$89.98. MGM/UA.

Suspect

1987. Cher, Dennis Quaid, Joe Mantegna; dir. Peter Yates. Public defender agrees to plead case of Vietnam vet charged with Washington, DC murder. 102m. (R) Hi ss \$89.95. RCA/Columbia.

PROGRAM LEGEND

DATE

Varies according to type of program. **Films:** original theatrical release. **Made-for-broad-cast:** first telecast. **Made-for-video:** first release in any format. **Compilations:** production of collected work.

FORMAT

All programs are available in Beta and VHS unless noted. All programs on disc are also available on tape unless noted.

B: Beta cassette
V: VHS cassette
8: 8mm cassette
LV: LaserVision videodisc in CLV or CAV format.

AUDIO

All available audio information is provided. Dolby noise reduction, used on virtually all VHS tapes, is not noted.

St: stereo

Hi: Hi-Fi

ss: Dolby surround stereo

cc: closed-captioned

CX: CX encoded

IMAGE RATING

For theatrical releases, this rating refers to the transfer quality and visual appearance. For non-theatrical programs, it refers to overall visual quality.

excel.
good
fair
poor

ETCETERA

Official MPAA ratings (G, PG, PG-13, R, X) are noted when available. All programs are in color unless noted.

anim.: animated

B&W: black & white

cas.: videocassette

comp.: compilation

czd.: colorized

dig.: digital

dir.: directed by

dub.: dubbed

m.: minutes

n.a.: not available

nar.: narrated by

NR: not rated

pr.: produced by

RE: reissue

sub.: subtitled

TVM: made for television

wr.: written by

Directory

Tanner '88

1988. Michael Murphy, Pamela Reed, Gary Hart, Robert Dole; wr. Garry Trudeau; dir. Robert Altman. First episode of much-praised cable TV series about fictitious presidential candidate. 120m. Hi \$79.99. HBO.

Written on the Wind

1956. Rock Hudson, Lauren Bacall, Robert Stack, Dorothy Malone; dir. Douglas Sirk. Stylish, lurid melodrama of dissolute oil tycoon and his oversexed sister. 99m. Hi \$29.95. MCA.

COMEDY

The Big Mouth

1967. Jerry Lewis, Harold J. Stone, Charlie Callas; pr./co-wr./dir. Lewis. Timid bank clerk drawn into search for stolen diamonds. 107m. Hi V only. \$69.95. RCA/Columbia.

The Big Store

1941. B&W. Marx Brothers, Margaret Dumont; dir. Charles Reisner. Groucho plays nutty detective hired to investigate thief-ridden department store. 80m. Hi \$19.95. MGM/UA.

Consuming Passions

1988. Vanessa Redgrave, Jonathan Pryce, Sammi Davis; dir. Giles Foster. Conglomerate takes over ailing chocolate factory. 98m. (R) Hi ss \$79.95. Virgin.

Cross My Heart

1987. Martin Short, Annette O'Toole, Paul Reiser; dir. Armyan Bernstein. Yuppies on disastrous date. 91m. (R) Hi ss V only. \$79.95. MCA.

The Doctor Takes a Wife

1940. B&W. Loretta Young, Ray Milland, Reginald Gardiner, Edmund Gwenn; dir. Alexander Hall. Medical professor must pretend he is husband of a socialite author. 89m. Hi V only. \$69.95. RCA/Columbia.

18 Again!

1988. George Burns, Charlie Schlatter, Tony Roberts, Red Buttons. Accident transposes personalities of octogenarian and grandson. 100m. (PG) Hi cc \$89.95. New World.

Emo Philips Live from the Hasty Pudding Theater!

1988. Offbeat comic ponders family life, dating, more. 60m. Hi \$39.99. HBO.

For Keeps

1988. Molly Ringwald, Randall Batinkoff, Kenneth Mars; dir. John G. Avildsen. Teen couple copes with unexpected pregnancy. 98m. (PG-13) Hi ss \$89.95. RCA/Columbia.

Forever, Lulu

1987. Hanna Schygulla, Alec Baldwin, Annie Golden, Deborah Harry; wr./pr./dir. Amos

Labels For Less



Roger Moore as James Bond

Warner's "Best of the Lot" discount inventory passes the 200-title mark with two new \$19.98 releases—the complete 117-minute version of *Exorcist II: The Heretic* and *Going Hollywood: The War Years* (see Directory listings)—plus 11 reissues at the same price, including *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Police Academy 4: Citizens on Patrol*, *Club Paradise*, *After Hours*, *Divine Madness*, *The World According to Garp*, *Altered States*, *Deadly Friend* and *Wolfen*.

• **RCA/Columbia** now asks just \$19.98 for three top-selling titles: *Stand by Me*, *About Last Night* and *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*.

• The only thing not scary about **New World's** Halloween promotion is the price: \$19.95 each for *Vamp*, *Mountaintop Motel Massacre*, *Return to Horror High* and *Zombie Nightmare*.

• **MGM/UA** has reissued six Moore "Bonds" (Roger Moore "Bonds," that is) at \$19.95 each: *For Your Eyes Only*, *Moonraker*, *Live and Let Die*, *Octopussy*, *The Man with the Golden Gun* and *The Spy Who Loved Me*. George Lazenby's sole outing as 007, *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, rounds out the roster.

• Also from **MGM/UA** comes a newly packaged lineup of classic musicals at the lowest price ever: \$19.98 each for *An American in Paris*, *Brigadoon*, *Gigi*, *High Society*, *Meet Me in St. Louis*, *On the Town*, *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, *Singin' in the Rain*, *That's Entertainment* and *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*, plus new titles *Love Me or Leave Me* and *For Me and My Gal* (see Directory listings).

• Heard the latest about **Embassy's** "Namedroppers" series? Rumor has it that Liz, Mia, Rock, Annette and a host of other ultras take star billing in eight titles reissued at \$14.95, including *Avalanche*, *Hopscotch*, *Bikini Beach*, *A Little Night Magic*, *A Man, a Woman and a Bank* and *Don't Drink the Water*. All are duped at the four-hour EP speed in VHS only.

—SD

Kollek. Downbeat farce of mistaken identities. 86m. (R) Hi \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

Going Bananas

1988. Dom DeLuise, Jimmie Walker, Herbert Lom; dir. Boaz Davidson. Safari expedition discovers talking chimp. 95m. (PG) Hi ss (ultra-stereo) \$79.95. Media.

A Guy Named Joe

1943. B&W. Spencer Tracy, Irene Dunne, Lionel Barrymore, Esther Williams; dir. Victor Fleming. WW II pilot killed in action returns as ghost to help another serviceman. 120m. \$19.95. MGM/UA.

Leonard, Part 6

1987. Bill Cosby, Tom Courtenay, Joe Don Baker; pr. Cosby; dir. Paul Weiland. Secret agent battles a woman determined to rule the world. 109m. (PG) Hi ss cc \$89.95. RCA/Columbia.

Martin Mull Live from North Ridgeville, Ohio

1988. Mull, Teri Garr, Fred Willard, Jack Riley. Tongue-in-cheek salute to comedian's home town. 60m. Hi \$39.99. HBO.

A Night in the Life of Jimmy Reardon

1988. River Phoenix, Meredith Salenger, Matthew L. Perry; wr./dir. William Richert. Sexual exploits of precocious teen from wrong side of the tracks. 95m. (R) Hi ss cc \$89.98. CBS/Fox.

Pass the Ammo

1988. Bill Paxton, Linda Kozlowski, Tim Curry, Annie Potts; dir. David Beaird. Swindled couple take revenge against televangelist during live broadcast. 93m. (R) Hi \$89.95. IVE.

Patti Rocks

1988. Chris Mulkey, John Jenkins, Karen Landry; dir. David Burton Morris. Man enlists friend's help in telling pregnant girlfriend he's married. 86m. (R) Hi ss \$79.95. Virgin.

Playing Away

1988. Norman Beaton, Robert Urquhart; dir. Horace Ove. Urban West Indian cricketers take on snooty small-town team. 100m. (NR) Hi \$79.98. Charter.

Police Academy 5: Assignment Miami Beach

1988. Bubba Smith, David Graf, Michael Winslow; dir. Alan Myerson. Commandant Lassard gets involved with jewel thieves on way to awards ceremony in Florida. 90m. (PG) Hi cc \$89.95. Warner.

Sam Kinison Live!

1988. Kinison delivers trademark screaming monologue; guest appearance by Rodney Dangerfield. 50m. (mature) Hi \$39.99. HBO.

The Young at Heart Comedians

1984. David Brenner, Henny Youngman, Carl Ballantine, George Gobel; dir. Joe Hostettler. Tribute to veteran stand-up comics. 77m. Hi \$29.95. Paramount.

DRAMA

Aloha Summer

1988. Chris Makepeace, Yuji Okumoto, Don Michael Paul; dir. Tommy Lee Wallace. Teens' Hawaiian vacation, summer 1959. 98m. (PG) Hi ss \$79.95. Lorimar.

Best Seller

1987. James Woods, Brian Dennehy, Victoria Tennant; dir. John Flynn. Cop, former hit man collaborate on tell-all book. 95m. (R) Hi cc \$89.98. Also Spanish-sub. version. Vestron.

Bleak House

1985. Denholm Elliott, Lucy Hornak, Philip Franks, Diana Rigg; dir. Ross Devenish. Dickens adaptation produced for British TV. 391m. 3 cas. Hi St \$79.98. CBS/Fox.

Bonjour Tristesse

1958. Deborah Kerr, David Niven, Jean Seberg; pr./dir. Otto Preminger. Teenage girl causes death of widowed father's mistress. 94m. Hi V only. \$69.95. RCA/Columbia.

The Commandos Strike at Dawn

1942. B&W. Paul Muni, Anna Lee, Lillian Gish, Cedric Hardwicke; wr. Irwin Shaw; dir. John Farrow. Norwegian fisherman helps British forces repel Nazis invasion. 100m. Hi V only. \$69.95. RCA/Columbia.

Gaby—A True Story

1987. Liv Ullmann, Norma Aleandro, Rachel Levin, Robert Loggia; dir. Luis Mandoki. Young woman transcends physical limitations of cerebral palsy with help of parents, devoted nanny. 115m. (NR) Hi \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

Great Expectations

1981. Gerry Sundquist. BBC-TV version of Dickens novel: unknown benefactor arranges poor lad's London education. 300m. 2 cas. Hi \$79.98. CBS/Fox.

Hamlet

1970. Nicol Williamson, Anthony Hopkins, Gordon Jackson, Judy Parfitt; dir. Tony Richardson. Feature adaptation of Shakespeare play. 114m. Hi V only. \$69.95. RCA/Columbia.

Intimate Contact

1988. Claire Bloom, Daniel Massey; dir. Waris Hussein. Woman learns her husband has contracted AIDS from prostitute. 159m. Hi \$79.99. HBO.

Lady in White

1988. Lukas Haas, Katherine Helmond, Len Cariou, Alex Rocco; wr./pr./dir. Frank LaLoggia. Girl's ghost implores young boy to solve mystery of her murder. 113m. (PG-13) Hi ss cc \$89.95. Virgin.

Oliver Twist

1985. Ben Rodska, Eric Porter, Frank Midlemass. Dickens rendered by BBC-TV: orphan joins pickpocket gang in 19th-century London. 333m. 2 cas. Hi St \$79.98. CBS/Fox.

Promised Land

1988. Kiefer Sutherland, Meg Ryan, Jason Gedrick, Tracy Pollan; wr./dir. Michael Hoffman. Reunited high school grads contemplate life's disappointments. 110m. (R) Hi \$89.98. Also Spanish-sub. version. Vestron.

Satisfaction

1988. Justine Bateman, Liam Neeson; dir. Joan Freeman. All-girl rock band lands dubious gig at beach resort. 93m. (PG-13) Hi ss cc \$89.98. CBS/Fox.

The Stranger

1987. Bonnie Bedelia, Peter Riegert; dir. Adolfo Aristarain. Amnesiac is sole witness to series of murders. 93m. (R) Hi ss \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

Walk on the Wild Side

1962. B&W. Laurence Harvey, Capucine, Jane Fonda, Barbara Stanwyck, Anne Baxter; dir. Edward Dmytryk. Depression-era farmer finds girl he once loved working in a brothel. 114m. Hi V only. \$69.95. RCA/Columbia.

SCIENCE FICTION/HORROR

American Gothic

1988. Rod Steiger, Yvonne De Carlo, Michael J. Pollard; dir. John Hough. Fanatic religious couple murders those who violate Biblical decrees. 89m. (R) Hi \$89.95. Vidmark.

Blood Feast

1963. Thomas Wood, Connie Mason; dir. Herschell Gordon Lewis. Insane caterer butchers party guests. 75m. (NR) \$29.98. New Star.

Curse of the Demon

1958. B&W. Dana Andrews, Peggy Cummins; dir. Jacques Tourneur. Psychologist investigates role of occult in mysterious deaths. 81m. (LP speed) \$9.95. Goodtimes.

It Came from Beneath the Sea

1955. B&W. Faith Domergue, Kenneth Tobey; dir. Robert Gordon; effects by Ray Harryhausen. Giant octopus attacks San Francisco. 80m. (LP speed) \$9.95. Goodtimes.

Night Wars

1988. Dan Haggerty; wr./dir. David Prior. Vietnam vet's nightmares take corporeal form. 90m. (R) Hi \$79.95. Sony.

The Outer Limits

1963-4. B&W. Episodes of TV series: *Nightmare* (with Martin Sheen), *The Man Who*

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Was Never Born (Martin Landau, Shirley Knight), *The Invisible Enemy* (Adam West, Ted Knight). 52m. ea. Hi \$14.95 ea. MGM/UA.

Scream, Blacula, Scream!

1973. William Marshall, Pam Grier, Richard Lawson; dir. Bob Kelljan. Sequel to *Blacula*: African prince resurrected as vampire. 96m. (PG) Hi \$59.98. Orion.

2,000 Maniacs

1964. Thomas Wood, Connie Mason; dir. Herschell Gordon Lewis. Southern town peopled by angry ghosts of residents slaughtered during Civil War. 70m. (NR) \$29.98. New Star.

ACTION

Braddock: Missing in Action III

1988. Chuck Norris; dir. Aaron Norris. Vet Braddock rescues Amer-asian orphans from Vietnam prison. 104m. (R) Hi ss cc \$89.95. Also Spanish-sub. version. Media.

Coffy

1973. Pam Grier, Robert DoQui, Booker Bradshaw; dir. Jack Hill. Nurse goes after drug pushers who hooked her young sister. 91m. (R) Hi \$59.98. Orion.

Cop

1988. James Woods, Lesley Ann Warren, Charles Durning, Charles Haid; dir. James B. Harris. Race to capture serial killer. 110m. (R) Hi cc V \$89.95. B \$29.95. Paramount.

The Desperados

1969. Vince Edwards, Jack Palance, George Maharis, Sylvia Syms; dir. Henry Levin. Outlaw band roams post-Civil War Texas. 90m. Hi V only. \$69.95. RCA/Columbia.

Foxy Brown

1974. Pam Grier, Peter Brown, Antonio Fargas; dir. Jack Hill. Grier again out to smash drug ring—this time for boyfriend's murder. 92m. (R) Hi \$59.98. Orion.

Friday Foster

1975. Pam Grier, Yaphet Kotto, Eartha Kitt, Carl Weathers; dir. Arthur Marks. Fashion photographer sees tycoon assassinated. 90m. (R) Hi \$59.98. Orion.

Hotel Colonial

1987. John Savage, Rachel Ward, Robert Duvall; dir. Cinzia Torrini. Man's search for missing brother uncovers involvement with Colombian drug traffickers. 103m. (R) Hi \$89.98. Nelson.

Quiet Thunder

1988. Wayne Crawford, June Chadwick; dir. David Rice. Witnesses to African political assassination flee through jungle. 94m. (PG-13) Hi \$79.95. IVE.

Rawhide (a.k.a. *Desperate Siege*)

1951. B&W. Tyrone Power, Susan Hayward, Hugh Marlowe; dir. Henry Hathaway. Western outlaws hold stagecoach passengers captive. 86m. Hi \$19.98. Playhouse.

Seven Cities of Gold

1955. Richard Egan, Anthony Quinn, Jeffrey Hunter; dir. Robert D. Webb. Spanish Conquistadors search for legendary Indian treasure. 103m. Hi \$19.98. Playhouse.

Sheba Baby

1975. Pam Grier, Rudy Challenger, Austin Stoker; dir. William Girdler. Tough female investigator. 90m. (PG) Hi \$59.98. Orion.

CHILDREN'S

The Adventures of Felix the Cat

1988 comp. Anim. Made-for-TV fare. 60m. Hi \$9.95. Hi-Tops.

Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp

1988. Anim. Boy befriends bottled genie. 70m. Hi \$9.95.

Bunnica, the Vampire Rabbit

1979. Anim. Newly acquired bunny exhibits strange behavior. 23m. V only. \$9.95. Goodtimes.

Commander Crumbcake, Vols. 3-4

1988. Live action/puppets. Talking canine's educational adventures: *Easy Comma, Easy Go, Raiders of the Lost Treasure*. 60m. ea. Hi \$14.95 ea. Hi-Tops.

Dot and the Koala

1988. Live action/anim. Pr./dir. Yoram Gross. 21st-century girl defends homeland against high-tech developers. 75m. Hi \$39.95. Family.

Gulliver in Lilliput

1982. Live action/anim. Andrew Burt, Linda Polan, Jonathan Cecie; dir. Barry Letts. Adaptation of Swift novel produced for British TV. 107m. Hi cc \$19.98. Playhouse.

It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown

Yr. n.a. Anim. Classic Halloween special shown annually on broadcast TV. 25m. Hi \$14.95. Hi-Tops.

The Light Princess

1979. Live action/anim. Stacey Dorning, John Fortune; dir. Andrew Gosling. BBC-TV program about princess so delicate she floats. 56m. Hi \$19.98. Playhouse.

Muppet Babies Video Storybook, Vols. 4-6

1988 comps. Anim. Charming fare from CBS TV series; stories include *Baby Piggy and the Thunderstorm*, *Even Kermit Gets Grouchy*, *Baby Fozzie Is Afraid of the Dark*. 30m. ea. V only. \$9.95 ea. Goodtimes.

Pee-Wee's Playhouse, Vols. 4-5

1987. Paul Reubens. Individual episodes of CBS TV show: *Beauty Make-Over, Restaurant*. 28m. ea. Hi \$14.95 ea. Hi-Tops.

Puss'n'Boots Travels Around the World

1983. Anim. Adventurous feline tours globe in 80 days. 70m. V only. \$9.95. Goodtimes.

The Secret Garden

1975. Sarah Hollis Andrews, David Patterson; pr. Dorothea Brooking. Lonely orphan girl discovers hidden world. 107m. Hi \$19.98. Playhouse.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Turtle Soup

1987. Anim. Spoof of action-adventure kidvid; includes *Enter the Shredder*. 41m. Hi \$14.95. Family.

What a Nightmare, Charlie Brown

Yr. n.a. Anim. Snoopy's indigestion gives him bad dreams. 30m. Hi \$14.95. Hi-Tops.

INSTRUCTIONAL

Breast Self Examination

1987. Dr. Jo Ann Arnason outlines cancer detection program. 30m. Hi \$9.95. Media.

Fight Back! Emergency Self-Defense for Women

1986. What to do if confronted; also includes aerobic routine. 55m. Hi \$19.95. Media.

Jack Nicklaus Shows You the Greatest 18 Holes of Major Championship Golf

1988. Tournament footage, technique tips; co-hosted by Jack Whitaker. 60m. Hi \$49.98. CBS/Fox.

Karate for Kids

1988. Master Sensei Joe Pagliuso demonstrates basic strikes, blocks, hand patterns, more; for ages 4 to 14. 40m. \$19.95. JCI.

Master System to Better Golf, Vol. 2

1988. Advice for seasoned players; available as one cas. (\$39.95) or three: *Fred Couples on Tempo*, *Paul Azinger on Fairway and Green Sand Traps*, *Bobby Wadkins on Trouble Shots*. Hi \$14.95 ea. Fox.

Men in Action

1987. Aerobic workouts for men in 3 cas.: *Beginner, Intermediate, General*. 60m. ea. Hi \$9.95 ea. Media.

Nancy Lopez: Golf Made Easy

1988. Pointers on equipment choice, grip, stance, putting, more. 48m. Hi \$39.95. Fox.

On the Attack Soccer Series

1988. Frans Van Balkom; nar. Bob Kehoe. Drill routines for young players, in 3 cas.: *Fast Footwork Feinting* (48m.), *Dribbling* (70m.), *Shooting and Heading* (68m.). \$19.95 ea. \$49.95 for set. Morris.

Shiatsu: Health at a Touch

1987. Stress-relieving massage techniques. 60m. Hi \$9.95. Media.

Tai Chi for Health

1987. Fitness program combines meditation, exercise. 60m. Hi \$9.95. Media.

MUSIC

The Folk Music Reunion

1988. Judy Collins, Mary Travers, John Sebastian, Glenn Yarbrough, the Kingston Trio; dir. Tom Grasso. Concert performance; includes "Both Sides Now," "Where Have All the Flowers Gone," "She's a Lady." 80m. Hi St \$19.95. JCI.

For Me and My Gal

1942. B&W. Judy Garland, Gene Kelly, George Murphy; dir. Busby Berkeley. Kelly debuted in bright musical about song-and-dance team. 104m. Hi \$19.95. MGM/UA.

Great White Videos

1988 comp. Metal band. Includes "Face the Day," "Since I've Been Loving You," "Rock Me." 37m. Hi St \$14.95. Radio.

La Forza del Destino

1984. Leontyne Price stars in Metropolitan production of Verdi's opera. Hi St sub. V \$39.95. B \$29.95. Paramount.

Lohengrin

1986. Peter Hofman, Eva Marton, Leonie Rysanek in Wagner's opera, taped live at the Metropolitan. Hi St sub. V \$39.95 B \$29.95. Paramount.

New Moon

1940. B&W. Jeanette MacDonald, Nelson Eddy, Mary Boland; dir. Robert Z. Leonard. Typical MacDonald/Eddy operetta, this time in old Louisiana; score by Oscar Hammerstein, Sigmund Romberg. 105m. Hi \$19.95. MGM/UA.

Pet Shop Boys: Television

1988 comp. Interviews, performance clips, plus music videos "West End Girls," "Love Comes Quickly," "Suburbia," more. 30m. Hi St \$14.95. Radio.

Simon Boccanegra

1984. Metropolitan production of Verdi's opera features Sherrill Milnes in title role. Hi St sub. V \$39.95. B \$29.95. Paramount.

Stand by Me

1987. George Michael, Elton John, Ben E. King, Boy George, Meatloaf; pr./dir. Mike Mansfield. Highlights of London AIDS benefit; songs include "Sorry Seems to Be the Hardest Word," "Born to Run." 60m. Hi ss \$19.95. Radio.

VERITE

Challenge the Rockies

1988. Nar. Peter Ustinov. Sporting activities of Rocky Mountain region, including kayaking, climbing, skiing. 53m. (G) Hi \$39.95. Media.

The Explorers: A Century of Discovery

1988. Nar. E.G. Marshall. Documentary marking National Geographic Society's 100th Anniversary. 90m. Hi cc \$29.98. Vestron.

Going Hollywood: The War Years

1988. Color/B&W. Pr./dir. Julian Schlossberg. Documentary on film capital's role in WW II; features newsreel footage, actors' reminiscences, clips from period films. 76m. Hi \$19.98. Warner.

Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous

1988 comps. Host Robin Leach. Profiles from syndicated TV series. 4 cas. *The Money Makers* (Donald Trump, Malcolm Forbes), *The World's Most Exotic Vacation Resorts* (Morgan Fairchild in Venice, John Forsythe in Monte Carlo), *Celebrity Homes* (Sophia Loren, George Hamilton, Robert Goulet), *Playthings of the Rich and Famous*. 45m. ea. \$9.95 ea. Goodtimes.

National Geographic Videos

Yrs. n.a. Trio of TV documentaries. *The Rhino War*: threat of extinction. *Living Treasures of Japan*: government-supported artists. *Creatures of the Mangrove*: Siarau island forest. 60m. ea. Hi \$29.98 ea. Vestron.

Visions of War

1988. B&W. Analyses of key WW II officers, offensives. 4 cas. *Gehlen: Hitler's Superspy*, *Battle for the Bulge*, *Battle for Warsaw*, *Operation Barbarossa*. 50m. ea. \$9.95 ea. New Star.

Waldheim: A Commission of Inquiry

1988. Abridged version of mock trial shown on cable TV, reviewing war-crime evidence

against Austrian President Kurt Waldheim. 155m. Hi \$79.99. HBO.

VIDEODISCS

Adam's Rib

1949. B&W. Spencer Tracy, Katharine Hepburn. Comedy. 101m. \$39.95. Criterion.

American Graffiti

1973. Ron Howard, Richard Dreyfuss; dir. George Lucas. Comedy/drama. 112m. (PG) ss CX \$34.95. (RE) MCA.

Anguish

1988. Zelda Rubinstein, Michael Lerner. Horror. 85m. (R) ss cc \$39.98. CBS/Fox.

Barbra Streisand: A Happening in Central Park

1967. Concert. 60m. CX \$29.95. Pioneer.

Benji the Hunted

1987. Dir. Joe Camp. Children's. 89m. (G) ss CX cc \$34.95. Disney.

Cartoon Classics: Here's Donald/Here's Goofy

1987 comp. Anim. Children's. Approx. 60m. \$24.95. Disney.

Elvis: One Night with You

1968. Classic TV performance. 53m. CX dig. \$29.95. Image.

Fairport Convention: It All Comes 'Round Again

1987. Documentary: rare footage of 1968-74 performances, excerpts from '87 reunion concert. 110m. St CX dig. \$36.95. Image.

Fatal Attraction

1987. Glenn Close, Michael Douglas. Drama/thriller. 120m. (R) ss dig. cc \$34.95. Paramount.

Footsteps of Giants

1986. Documentary on NASA. 60m. CX dig. \$29.95. Image.

High and Low

1963. B&W. Dir. Akira Kurosawa. Superbly filmed crime story. Letterboxed. 142m. 2 discs. sub. CX dig. \$59.95. Image.

John Coltrane: The Coltrane Legacy

1987. B&W. Profile of jazz saxophonist. 61m. St CX dig. \$29.95. Pioneer.

The Killing

1956. B&W. Sterling Hayden, Coleen Gray, Vince Edwards; wr./dir. Stanley Kubrick. Excellent drama of racetrack heist; not available on cas. 83m. \$39.95. Criterion.

Leonard Part VI

See listing in "Comedy." ss CX cc \$34.95. RCA/Columbia.

Live from the Met—Highlights, Vol. 1

1986 comp. Excerpts from *The Bartered Bride*, *Don Carlo*, *Tannhauser*, more. 70m. St CX dig. \$34.95. Pioneer.

Long Day's Journey into Night

1987. Jack Lemmon, Bethel Leslie. Cable-TV version of O'Neill drama. 169m. 2 discs. St CX dig. \$49.95. Image.

Moonstruck

See listing in "Highlights of the Month." ss CX cc dig. \$34.95. MGM/UA.

Mr. Skeffington

1944. B&W. Bette Davis, Claude Rains. Drama. 147m. (restored from 127m.) 2 discs. CX \$39.95. MGM/UA. ▶

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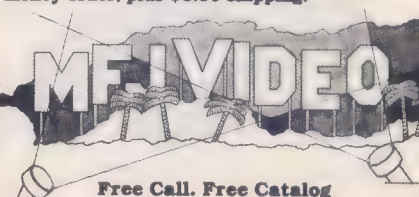
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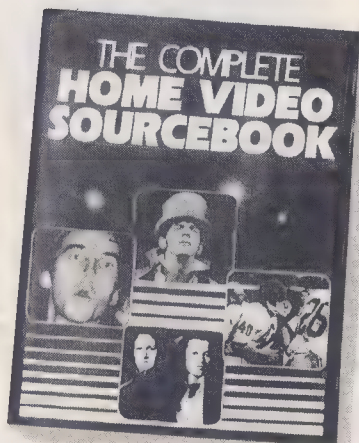
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DIRECTORY

Mutiny on the Bounty

1962. Marlon Brando, Trevor Howard. Drama. 179m. 2 discs. St CX \$39.95. MGM/UA.

North by Northwest

1959. Cary Grant, Eva Marie Saint; dir. Alfred Hitchcock. Suspense. Letterboxed. Includes interview with Hitchcock, film storyboards, commentary. 136m. CAV 3 discs. \$99.95. Criterion.

Nuts

1987. Barbra Streisand, Richard Dreyfuss. Drama. 116m. (R) ss CX dig. cc \$34.98. Warner.

The Plainsman

1937. B&W. Gary Cooper, Jean Arthur; dir. Cecil B. DeMille. Western; chapter stops, trailer included. 113m. CX \$34.98. MCA.

Prince of Darkness

1987. Donald Pleasence, Jameson Parker; dir. John Carpenter. Horror. 102m. (R) ss CX dig. \$34.98. MCA.

The Road to Utopia

1946. B&W. Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Dorothy Lamour. Comedy; includes trailer. 90m. CX \$34.98. MCA.

Salvador Dali

Yr. n.a. Nar. Orson Welles. Documentary. CX dig. \$29.95. Image.

Trumpet Kings

1985. Color/B&W. Louis Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie. 72m. \$29.95. Pioneer.

SOURCES

Tapes and discs are not available for sale directly from companies listed unless the phone number given specifies "orders." See end of listings for phone/mail-order distributors that may be able to help locate desired releases.

Axon Video, 1900 Broadway, New York, NY 10023; 212-787-8228.

CBS/Fox Video, 1211 Sixth Ave., New York, NY 10036; 212-819-3200.

Charter Entertainment: see **Nelson**.

The Criterion Collection, Voyager Co., 2139 Manning Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90025; 213-475-3524, orders 800-446-2001, in CA 800-443-2001.

Walt Disney Home Video, 500 S. Buena Vista St., Burbank, CA 91521; 818-840-1111.

Family Home Entertainment: see **IVE**.

Fox Hills Video, 2730 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90403; 213-829-7441.

Goodtimes Home Video, 401 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10016; 212-889-0044.

HBO Video, 1370 Sixth Ave., New York, NY 10019; 212-977-8990.

Hi-Tops: see **Media**.

Image Entertainment, 6311 Romaine St., Hollywood, CA 90038; 213-468-8867.

IVE 500 N. Ventu Park Rd., Box 2520, Newbury Park, CA 91320; 805-499-5827, orders 800-PLAY-IVE.

JCI Video, 5308 Derry Ave., Agoura Hills, CA 91301; orders 818-889-9022, outside CA 800-223-7479.

LaserDisc Corporation of America: see **Pioneer**.

Lorimar Home Video, 17942 Cowan Ave., Irvine, CA 92714; 714-474-0355, orders 800-323-5275.

MCA Home Video, 70 Universal City Plaza, Universal City, CA 91608; 818-777-4315.

Media Home Entertainment, 5730 Buckingham Pkwy., Culver City, CA 90230; 213-216-7900.

MGM/UA Home Video, 10000 Washington Blvd., Culver City, CA 90232; 213-280-6000, orders 800-FAST-MGM.

Morris Video, 2730 Monterey St., Torrance, CA 90503; 213-533-4800.

Nelson Entertainment, 335 N. Maple Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210; 213-285-6000.

New Star Entertainment, 260 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90212; 800-346-3168.

New World Video, 1440 S. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90025; 213-444-8100.

Orion Home Video, 540 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022; 212-888-4500.

Paramount Home Video, 5555 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90038-3197; 213-468-5000.

Pioneer Laser Entertainment, 915 East 230 St., Carson, CA 90745; 213-518-0710.

Playhouse Video: see **CBS/Fox**.

Radio Vision Video: see **IVE**.

RCA/Columbia Pictures Home Video, 3500 W. Olive Ave., Burbank, CA 91505; 818-953-7900.

Sony Video Software, 1700 Broadway, New York, NY 10019; 212-757-4990.

Touchstone Home Video: see **Disney**.

Vestron Video, PO Box 10382, Stamford, CT 06901; 203-978-5400.

Vidmark Entertainment, 2901 Ocean Pk. Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90405-2906; 213-829-8877.

Virgin Vision, 6100 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048; 213-857-5200.

Warner Home Video, 4000 Warner Blvd., Burbank, CA 91522; 818-954-6000.

PHONE/MAIL-ORDER SERVICES

Facets Multimedia, 1517 W. Fullerton Ave., Chicago, IL 60614; 800-331-6197.

Home Film Festival (rent-by-mail service, also purchases), Box 2032, Scranton, PA 18501-9952; 800-258-3456; in PA 800-633-3456.

Movies Unlimited, 6736 Castor Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19149; 800-523-0823.

New Video, 276 Third Ave., New York, NY 10010; 212-475-7400, 800-431-2299.

Video Schoolhouse, 2611 Garden Road, Monterey, CA 93940; 408-375-4474, 800-345-1441.

Videotakes, 220 Shrewsbury Ave., Red Bank, NJ 07701; 800-526-7002, 201-747-2444. ■

TERA TV

continued from page 35

displayed on screen. The + and - buttons adjust the selected parameter and the reset button returns all selections to their factory settings.

The compartment also has slide switches for standard/HRC, TV/CATV, video noise reduction, 3.58 mHz trap, normal, manual and automatic fine tuning add-erase/skip. The manual fine tuning position has up and down buttons for stations outside the range of the automatic circuitry. The add-erase/skip switch has add and erase buttons for altering the programmable scan tuning sequence.

The rear panel is uncluttered. There are F-connectors for antenna/cable input, a loop-through output of the antenna cable input for feeding a cable box or another set, an auxiliary input, an S-video jack in parallel with the video 1 input above the screw terminals for UHF input, RCA-type pin jacks for video 1 and video 2 inputs and two sets of outputs.

One output set delivers fixed audio output suitable for recording the selected signal. The other has an audio level that can be controlled by the volume control. Audio from this output may be used to feed an external amplifier and speakers. Each column has jacks for video and left and right audio.

The remote control is somewhat wedge-shaped because the battery compartment is near the front and the infrared window area is fairly tall, causing the top to slope gently backward. On top of the remote are an LED to confirm that a signal is being sent and large buttons for power, speaker, muting and headphone.

The power button is green. The other three are yellow. The speakers and headphones can be turned on or off independently. Volume and channel selectors look like large rockers but are really independent up and down buttons covered by a flexible cover that resembles a rocker.

The direct access keypad, revert and display controls are a medium gray. Reset, the +/- picture rocker, select and its associated +/- rocker are a light gray. The buttons for CNR, CATV/TV, MTS, sleep, TV/V1-3, and antenna/auxiliary are black. The back has jacks for two pairs of stereophones.

Operation. Using the Tera 629A can be as simple as using any remote-controlled TV or slightly more complex if you use its more unusual options. Primary control is from the remote. Volume, direct access channel tuning, muting and picture are standard. Revert is just another name for channel recall. The select, +/- rocker

and reset are becoming a standard way to reduce the number of controls for black level, detail, color, tint, bass, treble and balance functions.

Display recalls source information to the screen. CATV/TV, ant./aux. and TV/V1-3 are self-explanatory. MTS cycles through main (mono or stereo), SAP and dual audio options. Sleep sets the automatic turn-off time in 10-minute increments from 90 minutes down. The color noise control duplicates one in the front compartment. The set's external controls are duplicated on the remote.

On the front panel, and not duplicated on the remote, are the main power switch, vertical hold, standard HRC, normal, 3.58 mHz trap, VNR, AFT/MFT, add-erase/skip and their associated buttons. We agree with Tera's choices except for the manual fine tuning controls. Since the set does not memorize these settings it would be convenient to be able to adjust for unusual channels from the remote. We also

*Tera's infrared
headphone system
is sheer genius.*

have mixed feelings about whether the VNR switch should be added to the remote. Otherwise, ease of operation is excellent.

Performance. The 629A delivers 410 lines of horizontal resolution with a video signal-to-noise ratio of 57.1 decibels at the green gun. Chroma AM S/N is 64.4 dB and chroma PM S/N is 64.5 dB, both measured at the red gun. The set is adjusted for a color temperature of 9300 degrees Kelvin, and color accuracy is excellent if a little cool. Overall picture quality is excellent.

The audio performance of the speakers is impressive and demonstrates a substantial bass response down to the 50 Hertz region. If you prefer an external amplifier, the speakers' frequency response at the line output jacks is 20 Hertz to 20 kilohertz, +0.3/-1.1 dB from line-in sources. The audio S/N is 78 dB and the total harmonic distortion is 0.4 percent.

Conclusion. Tera's 629A is an excellent performer with a somewhat cool picture that has very little noise. Its powerful amplifier and speaker system produce much better sound than would normally be expected from built-in speakers. The infrared system for delivering stereophone audio from the remote is sheer genius: no more cord trailing back to the set or additional IR devices. At \$1,950 it is a bit pricey, but the level of performance and convenience seem well worth it. ■

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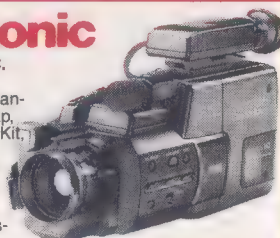


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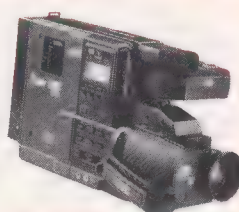


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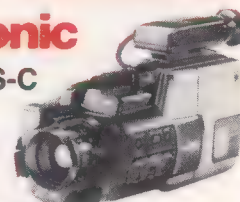
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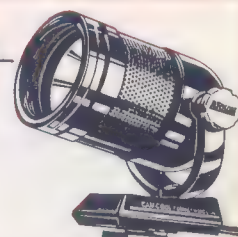


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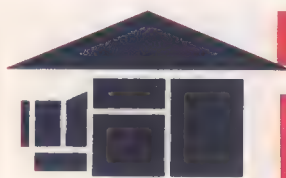
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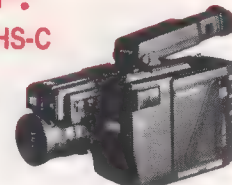


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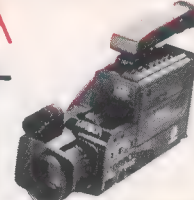
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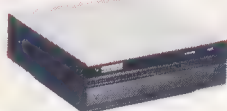
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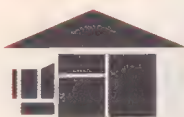
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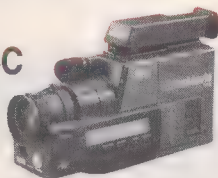


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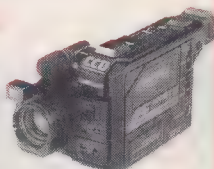
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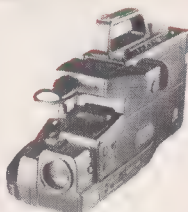
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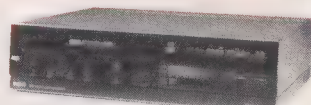
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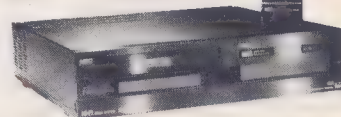
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VIDEOTESTS

CANON 8MM

continued from page 35

the lens barrel or use the one-shot autofocus button. The grip on the right of the lens area has the usual safety strap, the run/stop trigger on the back and the tele/wide angle rocker on top.

On the right side of the body are mini jacks for an earphone and a mixing input. Sound from both the main microphone and the mix source will be heard. The proportion of the mix should be adjusted at the mix source. If you are using only an external microphone the main microphone

should be removed from its mount on the viewfinder and replaced by the external microphone. Farther back are the cassette hatch and buttons for fast forward (search), play, rewind (search), stop, pause/still, slow, tape return and record, as well as an edit switch.

On the top are buttons for power and eject and a switch to determine whether the audio/video jacks operate as line in or line out/camera. Near the front edge is an accessory shoe for the carrying handle, which has a second accessory jack on top. The battery slides into a slot on the rear panel that hosts the battery contacts and a compartment for the clock battery. On the bottom panel is the tripod socket.

The remote control is a bit smaller than those supplied with most table-model VCRs. There are the usual record, play, stop, fast forward (search) and rewind controls, but controls here for slow motion, art and strobe are unusual. Counter reset and tape return (to 0000) are very useful for returning to a point chosen from the remote. It also has run/stop, tele and wide angle buttons, and even buttons to turn the title and date on and off.

Operation. Even though there is a large number of options, using the E708 is easy because of the sophisticated degree of automation. The manual/program mode
chart on page 98
text continued on page 100

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E	CCD-F40	CCD-V9

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E70 8mm CALL

F-1000 Super VHS 10times Zoom CALL

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Video Tape Repair Kit.....12

Cigarette Lighter Cords.....From 12

Deluxe 3pc Filter Kit.....22

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2X Telephoto.....74

Wide Angle+Tele Lens Kit.....49

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Below is a letter from our
company president,
Major M.S. Lehmann,
published in the
September 1987 issue
of Video Magazine.

NOT JUST VIDEO
Video Magazine
460 W. 34 Street, NYC

On cam scams
In "Stock Splitting Cam Scams" ("Off the Air,"
July '87), Doug Garr reports on the fraudulent
sales tactics sometimes practiced by video
equipment stores and mail order houses. By
bringing these facts to light, you help readers
better protect themselves from being ripped off.
Mail order houses that advertise products
honestly are constantly at a disadvantage. There
is an overabundance of "bait and switch houses"
and others that mislead customers with false
advertising. I speak for honest mail order houses
when I applaud you for printing such an article.

Major Lehmann
President, Not Just Video, Inc.
New York, N.Y.

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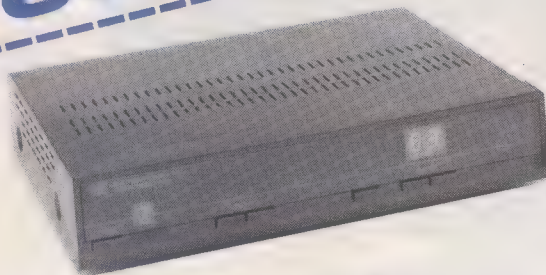
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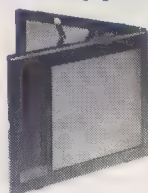
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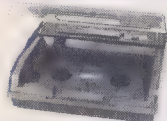
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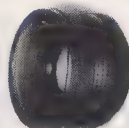


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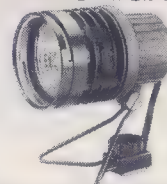


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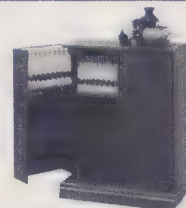


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VD-10

Canon E708 8mm Camcorder

continued from page 94

DATA

Suggested Price:
\$1,950

Weight:
3.3 pounds without battery; 0.6 pounds, battery

Dimensions:
6 x 5-5/8 x 11-7/8 inches (h/w/d)

Power Requirements:
6 VDC, camcorder; 100-240 VAC, 50-60Hz, AC adapter

Power Consumption:
7.7 W, camcorder; 20 W, AC adapter

Image Sensor:
1/2-inch CCD

Lens:
f/1.4, 8x (8.5-68 mm) power zoom with macro range

Filter Diameter:
46 mm

Minimum Focusing Distance:

3.9 feet in auto and 2 feet in tele-macro

Autofocus:

yes, switchable to manual with one touch AF

Minimum Illumination:

rated—7 lux; measured—9.1 lux for 50 IRE units

Iris:

automatic full-field average or center weighted

Sensitivity:
single range

Auto Fade:
to black or to white

High Speed Shutter:
normal (off), 1/500- and 1/1000-second

White Balance:
auto with lock position

Viewfinder:
0.7-inch CRT with onscreen indicators for center (focus), WB lock, 1/1000, 1/500, record, record pause, record re-

view, play, still, FF, rewind, eject, counter, tape (end near), tape end, battery (low), dew, date (low or missing battery) and two lines of titles

Viewfinder Controls:
diopter focus and picture invert

VCR Controls:
all, including FF, play, rewind, stop, pause/still, slow, tape return, record, eject and edit

Microphone:
uni-directional electret condenser

Jacks:
audio mixing, earphone, audio and video input/output, DC out, and ext mic by unplugging attached mic

Tape Format:
8mm

Tape Speeds:
SP only

Still Frame:
digital

Slow Motion:
1/3x, digital

Cue & Review (Search):
7x

Fast Forward/Rewind Time:
4-1/2 min. for P6-90; less than 7 min. for P6-120

Remote:
IR wireless with buttons for counter reset, tape return, slow, pause, rewind, fast forward, record, art, strobe, clear, stop, play, date, title, display, zoom, wide, tele, start/stop

Counter Digits:
4

Counter Memory:
tape return to 0000

Hi-Fi (AFM) Audio:
mono

Other Features:
separate eject, auto rewind

Absent Features:
frame advance, speed

play, program start locator, audio dub, video dub, linear audio

Accessories:

supplied—remote control with batteries, BP-E22/E22E 70 min. battery pack, CA-E2 compact power adapter, BC-E3 battery (charge) coupler, RU-E3 RF unit, SS-E2 shoulder strap, carrying handle and P6-E30 cassette; optional—CB-E2 car battery adapter, SB-E1 shoulder brace, CP-3 chest pod, SC-E708 soft carrying case, HC-E708 hard system case, DM-200 super-directional mic, MM-100 mixing mic, MB-100 mic boom, wide attachment, tele-converter, multi-conversion lens, filter sets

RESULTS

Horiz. Resolution:
rated—230 lines; measured—240 lines

S/N, Video Luminance:
43.7 dB, unweighted; 49.9 dB, weighted

S/N, Chroma AM:
44.7 dB

S/N, Chroma PM:
43.2 dB

Audio Frequency Response:
20 Hz-16 kHz, +0.1/-3dB; down 9 dB at 20kHz

S/N, Audio:
65.3 dB

Audio Distortion:
0.5%

RATINGS

Picture Quality:
very good, 8mm standards

Audio Quality:
very good

Operational Ease:
excellent

Overall Performance:
very good/excellent ▶

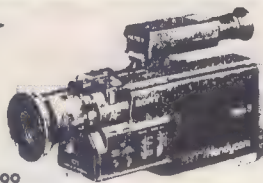
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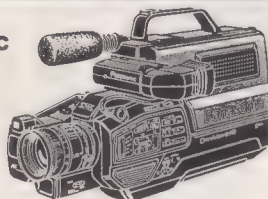
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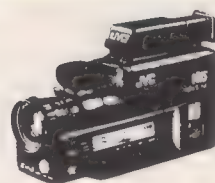
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PV-400



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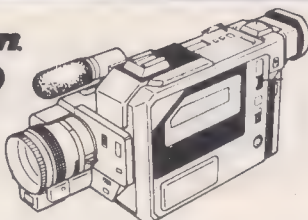
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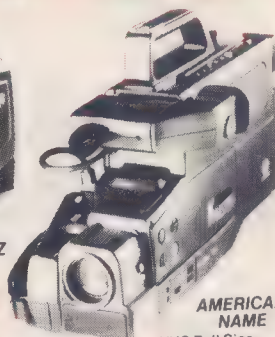


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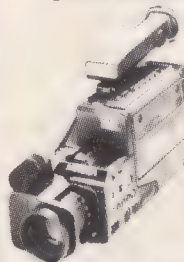
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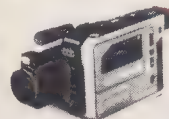
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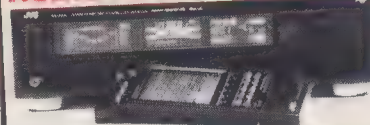


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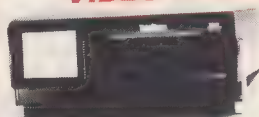
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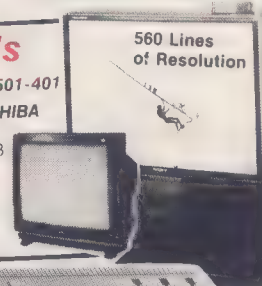
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VIDEOTESTS

continued from page 94

switch sets focus, white balance and metering to automatic and turns off the high-speed shutter and sepia in a single action. In that position all you have to do is compose the shot and press run/stop. Setting the options manually is straightforward.

Focus offers an option that may be unique: a macro range at any zoom position. At the longest telephoto setting it covers an area about 2-1/2 inches wide by 1-7/8 inches high at about two feet from the lens. Manual white balance offers a more versatile setting than just single indoor and outdoor presets.

Remote operation in camera mode opens up new possibilities to anyone wanting to operate the camera from a distance. You can now shoot from a concealed location or even do a two-camera shoot by yourself. All you need is a monitor wired to the output connector. If you want to be able to position the camcorder as well, Spiratone, Inc. (135-06 Northern Blvd., Flushing, NY 11354-4063) offers the Panomat, a device that lets you pan a camera 180 degrees or tilt it 30 degrees from a wired remote. It can be powered by AA cells or through an AC adapter.

The E708's remote control also saves

you from having to be within arm's length of the camcorder to enjoy digital special effects playback.

Performance. The E708 delivers about 240 lines of horizontal resolution with an unweighted video signal-to-noise ratio of 43.7 decibels and a weighted video S/N of 49.9 dB. Chroma AM S/N is 44.7 dB and chroma PM S/N is 43.2 dB. The picture is very good by 8mm standards.

Its digital special effects deserve special mention. The 1/3x slow motion is free of noise, and even though Canon warns that there may be some flagging (slanting of the top of the picture), we didn't see any. The still picture is nearly perfect. The six digital strobe speeds and the three levels of digital art add to the range of options for either viewing or editing.

The audio frequency response is flat within +0.1/-3.0 dB from 20 hertz to 16 kilohertz and down -9 dB at 20 kHz. Audio S/N is 65.3 dB and total harmonic distortion is 0.5 percent, so audio quality is very good, flawed only by the frequency response at 20 kHz.

Conclusion. Canon's E708 camcorder opens a new era of camcorder flexibility thanks to its remote control. The operator is freed from having the camcorder in hand

and can even operate it while on camera. Coupled with excellent ease of operation and very good video and audio quality, its overall rating is very good to excellent. Its suggested price is \$1,950, a bit on the high end but justifiable when you consider all the remote and digital features. We recommend it highly. ■

TECH TIP

Unerasable tape

Many newer VCRs automatically pull a short length of tape onto the take-up reel to prevent the machine from threading on the leader. But once a cassette has been used a few times, it's almost impossible to re-record on that first stretch of tape. To avoid this, wind the tape ahead a few inches when you first use it, giving the VCR room to rewind and re-record on this section later on. If your VCR won't wind back far enough to erase this earlier segment, you can erase it manually by opening the tape lid and sliding a thin, flat magnet underneath the first few inches of the tape.

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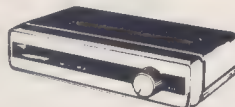
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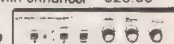
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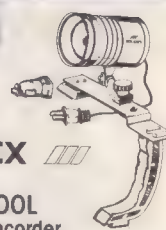
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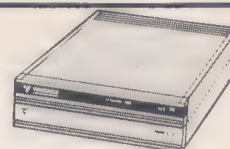
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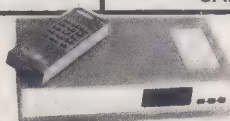
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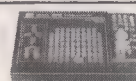
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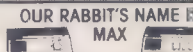


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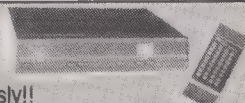
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VIDEOTESTS

PIONEER TV

continued from page 36

to control other Pioneer equipment but may be reprogrammed to control almost any other device that accepts infrared commands.

Description. The SD-P452 is available with an oak veneer or a walnut finish. Below the screen is a narrow band hosting the remote sensor, a DPO indicator, a room light sensor, a covered control compartment and an indicator panel with LEDs for power, stereo, SAP and mono. The compartment has buttons for power, input,

volume up and down, channel up and down, add, erase, A/V memory 1 and 2 and DPO; rotary controls for red horizontal and vertical convergence, blue horizontal and vertical convergence, vertical hold and left/right audio balance; and switches for convergence test signal on/off, TV/standard/HRC channel spacing and external/internal (surround off) speaker selection. A duplicate set of jacks for the video 2 input has priority over those on the rear panel. The left and right speakers in the base are covered by a cloth grille.

At the top of the rear panel are single F-connectors for antenna 1 and 2. You must supply combiners if you use VHS and UHF antennas. Under these are stereo

audio and video connectors for a videodisc player, video 1 and video 2 followed by the S-video connector.

In the group below are stereo audio and video outputs for a monitor and a TV tuner. The monitor output can carry any signal except video 1. The control out jack for the system remote feature has an on/off switch. Spring-loaded terminals for external speakers may carry front or surround information depending on the setting of the front panel internal/external and surround processor switches. There are also a surround (front/rear) balance control and line level outputs for the surround processor.

One of the switches on the remote control is used only when programming the

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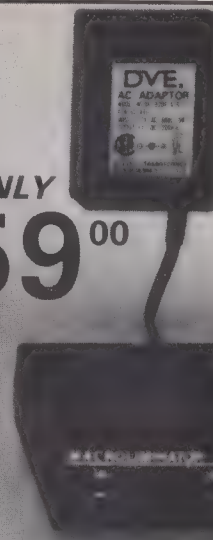
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assignable buttons and rockers, while another allows those assignable buttons to operate three different devices. The only really unusual button is for standard/AV memory, which cycles through the picture and sound settings memorized by the front panel A/V memory buttons.

Operation. All the basic functions of the SD-P452 are easy to use but the advance copy of the manual we examined is slightly fuzzy about programming the remote control for non-Pioneer devices. Although complete, it is sketchy on using the internal amplifiers for powering surround speakers. Otherwise, using the set and its remote are as simple as using any other remote-controlled TV.

Performance. Pioneer's new screen

and the green phosphor of its guns improve the performance of this projection TV over all previous models. Horizontal resolution is actually a bit better than its rated 650 lines. Luminance signal-to-noise ratio at the green tube measures 56.1 decibels while chroma AM S/N is 63.3 dB and chroma PM S/N is 62.7 dB, both at the red gun.

Screen contrast is excellent, with blacks tending not to go gray. Using Pio-

neer's method of measurement, the TV offers 350 footlamberts, as rated, and light falloff to -5 dB (barely perceptible) is extended to 22 degrees off axis, resulting in a bright picture even when viewed standing up. Pioneer's ratings at the -10 dB points claim a 50-degree vertical viewing angle and a 120-degree horizontal viewing angle. There is no standardized method of measuring the screen brightness of projection TVs. Picture quality is excellent. ▶

Next Month In

VIDEO

magazine

Big Screen Shootout

An illuminating comparison of nine top 27-inch TVs—the sixth in our Eyes-On series.

High-End VCRs

An in-depth guide to the best decks in all formats.

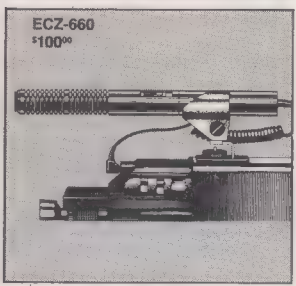
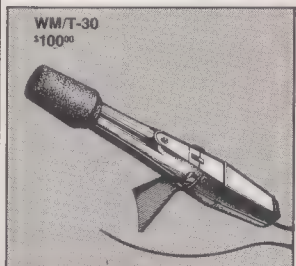
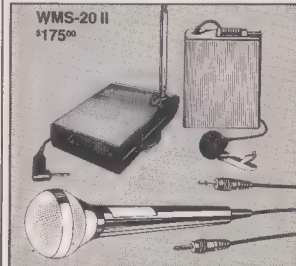
Comedy On The Rocks

Screwball comedies used sharp wit and romance to charm a generation. A look at how they did it and whether they're coming back.

Campaigning By Video

As the election approaches, candidates are throwing some of their best punches on tape. A look at how they land.

Plus New Videotests, New Reviews, New Listings



Quality audio for video. II

Introducing the second generation of wireless mics. Designed to overcome the noises created by the camera's internal motors and IC chips, these smaller, lighter weight units far exceed the performance of all previous models.



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ECZ-660—An electret condenser zoom microphone with dual pattern. In the "long" position it acts as a sound beam, letting you zoom in on your subject, cutting out side noises. In the "short" position it acts like a wide-angle mic.



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The audio performance of the internal speakers is good to very good, but with surround and external speakers performance is excellent. The internal amplifier makes the frequency response rating of 50 Hertz to 15 kilohertz easily and improves to the full hearing range at the line output terminals. We recommend connecting the set to a hi-fi system and using the internal amplifiers to power the surround speakers. The internal amplifier's total harmonic

distortion is rated at 1 percent and measured at 0.8 percent. Audio S/N at the speaker terminals is 71 dB using video 1 as the source. Audio performance is very good.

Conclusion. Pioneer's SD-P452 is an excellent overall performer with an emphasis on picture quality. Its resolution, contrast and brightness establish new benchmarks among the rear projection models we've tested. Despite its very good rating

on audio, none of its competitors has much better internal speakers. Its suggested price of \$3,850 is competitive and only \$350 over Pioneer's 40-inch model. We recommend it to anyone looking for a state-of-the-art rear projection TV. ■

PANASONIC

continued from page 37

Switch on the EIS and scenes take on the smoothness of professional shots. This makes picture quality very good to excellent in our book.

Audio quality is very good for a mono linear track recorder with a frequency response of 125 Hertz to 10 kilohertz at the -3 dB points. Audio S/N is 42.8 dB and the total harmonic distortion is 1.3 percent. The audio dub feature is very handy.

Conclusion. The PV-460's image stabilization eliminates the traditional shakiness of home tapes even at the extreme 10x telephoto position. If you hate carrying a tripod it will drastically reduce motion sickness in people viewing your tapes. You should strongly consider it at its suggested price of \$2,300. ■

chart on page 121

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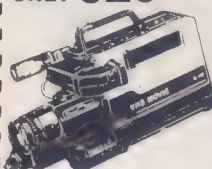
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TECH TIPS

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Almost all camcorder lenses offer a macro range that enables the lens to photograph small objects at close range, resulting in larger than life-size images. However, on some models the feature works too well, photographing objects that almost touch the surface of the lens. Since a camcorder's lens hood often protrudes beyond this range, remember to remove it when using the super close-up mode in order to approach the target better and to avoid the shadows cast by the flared edge of the hood.

Video correspondence

Sending a "videocassette letter" to someone? First-class mail will get it there, of course, but remember that videotapes qualify for the post office's fourth-class rate, which costs considerably less (but is slower) than first-class mail. Most stationery stores now carry reinforced cassette mailers that simplify the task of addressing the tape and protect the cassette's tape reels from excess movement en route.

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At VIDEO Magazine, we believe our readers should get what they order from our mail-order advertisers at the prices indicated and in a timely fashion. We stand behind that belief by taking steps to determine that an advertiser is reputable and reliable before accepting an advertisement. Additionally, if we learn that an advertiser engages in a regular pattern of unfair or improper business practices, we will deny that advertiser the opportunity to advertise in VIDEO Magazine.

Nonetheless, the responsibility for fair dealing ultimately lies with the advertisers themselves, and unfortunately VIDEO Magazine cannot guarantee their behavior. Therefore, we feel it is important for our readers to know what their rights are and to follow the tips set forth below for purchasing merchandise by mail. Further, we are prepared to use our best efforts to assist any customer who has been improperly or unfairly dealt with by one of our advertisers.

Our requirements for advertising in VIDEO Magazine and our offer of assistance to aggrieved purchasers do not in any way limit either the obligation of an advertiser to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations or our customers' ability to enforce their rights under those laws.

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4. Check whether the advertiser has a return policy.
5. Keep a record of your order and all other transactions and get the names of all persons with whom you speak.
6. Never send cash. Pay by check or money order or with a credit card so you will have a record of your transaction. If you pay by credit card, you may have a greater measure of recourse in the event the advertiser does not perform. (Check the complaint procedures

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7. If you receive damaged or improper merchandise, contact the advertiser as soon as possible.

8. Get a receipt from the shipper whenever you return merchandise.

9. Since VIDEO Magazine will not continue to accept advertising from businesses that have engaged in a regular pattern of unfair or improper dealing with our readers, try to determine which have been long-standing advertisers in VIDEO Magazine.

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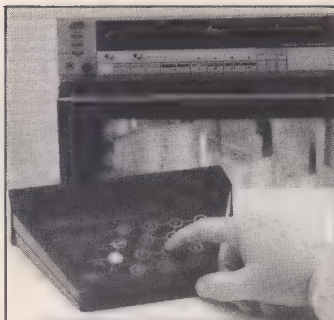


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HOT SEAT

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| <input type="checkbox"/> BUNNY BLEU | <input type="checkbox"/> BLONDIE BEE | <input type="checkbox"/> JANIE ROBINS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> KARI FOXX | <input type="checkbox"/> BUFFY ST. JOHNS | <input type="checkbox"/> LACEY LUV |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MINDY RAE | <input type="checkbox"/> MELBA TEASE | <input type="checkbox"/> NICOLE WEST |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> BUNNY BLAKE | <input type="checkbox"/> SUNNY DAVE | <input type="checkbox"/> CODY NICOLE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> APRIL MAY | <input type="checkbox"/> KEISHA | <input type="checkbox"/> TIFFANY CLARK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> KELI RICHARDS | <input type="checkbox"/> MAGGIE THAMES | <input type="checkbox"/> CRYSTAL HART |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> LOIS AYRES | <input type="checkbox"/> BUFFY DAVIS | <input type="checkbox"/> RACHEL RYAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NINA HARTLEY | <input type="checkbox"/> BRIANNA STARR | <input type="checkbox"/> SEKA |
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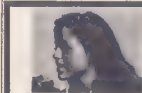
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Panasonic PV-460 Electronic Image Stabilization VHS Camcorder

continued from
page 106

DATA

Suggested Price:
\$2,300

Weight:
7.5 pounds

Dimensions:
9 x 5-5/8 x 16-1/4
inches (h/w/d)

Power Requirements:
12 VDC, camcorder;
110/120/220/240 VAC,
50/60 Hertz, AC adapter

Power Consumption:
18 W, camcorder; 40 W,
AC adapter

Image Sensor:
1/2-inch CCD

Lens:
f/1.6, 10x (8-80 mm) 2-
speed power zoom with
macro

**Minimum Focusing
Distance:**
5 feet, normal; 1 inch,
macro

Autofocus:
switchable to manual

**Minimum
Illumination:**
rated and measured,
15 lux

Iris:
automatic with switch-
able backlight control

Sensitivity:
single range

High Speed Shutter:
normal, 1/250-, 1/500-,
1/1000-sec.

White Balance:
indoor/automatic/outdoor
switchable

Viewfinder:
electronic—2/3-inch
CRT with onscreen indi-
cators for battery condi-
tion; low battery, no tape

tab, dew, time/date,
counter/elapsed time, in-
dex, EIS, manual white
balance, high speed
shutter and low light

Viewfinder Controls:
diopter focus, electrical
focus and brightness

VCR Controls:
record, audio dub, re-
wind (search), play, fast
forward (search), pause
and stop

Microphone:
electret condenser

Jacks:
adapter, remote, head-
phone and external mic

Tape Format:
VHS

Tape Speeds:
SP only

**Cue & Review
(Search):**
3x approx.

**Fast Forward/
Rewind Time:**
approx. 10 min.
for T-120

Remote:
wired run/pause

Counter:
four digits or elapsed
time (record mode only)
with memory

**Program Start
Locator/Index/Cue:**
auto/manual index
and address

Linear Audio:
mono

Other Features:
audio dub, video dub,
auto fade, still frame,
separate eject, auto
rewind

Absent Features:
hi-fi audio, frame ad-
vance, slow motion,
speed play, visible FF
and rewind

Accessories:
supplied—PV-A22MC
AC adapter, PV-BP88
battery (1 hr. 40 min.),
shoulder strap, audio/
video output adapter,
audio/video cable, an-
tenna cable, 300- to 75-
ohm antenna transfor-
mer, LR1130 clock battery,
wired remote control,
earphone and hard car-
rying case; optional—
extra batteries and AC
adapter, tape, PV-A118

plug-in AC adapter, PV-
C80 car battery cord,
PV-G40 character gener-
ator and PV-TA42 tuner
adapter

RESULTS

Horiz. Resolution:
recorder—240 lines;
camera—300 lines

**S/N, Video Lumi-
nance, Unweighted:**
43.7 dB

**S/N, Video Lumi-
nance, Weighted:**
51.4 dB

S/N, Chroma AM:
42.2 dB

S/N, Chroma PM:
42.3 dB

**Audio Frequency
Response:**
125 Hz-10 kHz, -3 dB

S/N, Audio:
42.8 dB

Audio Distortion:
1.3%

RATINGS

Picture Quality:

very good/excellent
for VHS

Audio Quality:
very good for linear
track

Operational Ease:
excellent

Overall Performance:
very good/excellent

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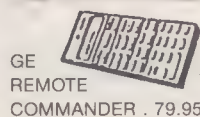
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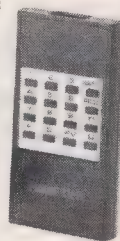
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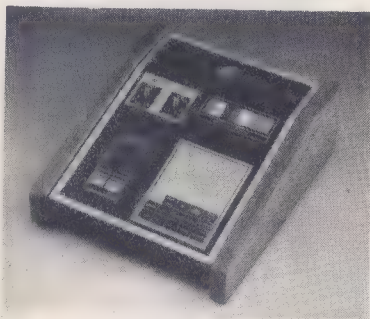
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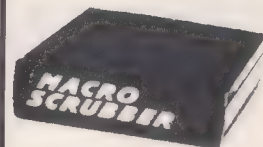
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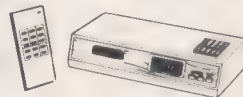
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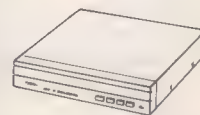
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TRICK SHOOTERS

continued from page 58

duces minor stability flaws.

The Magnavox VHS CVJ360, for \$2,400, comes with an "auto image stabilizing system" that offers two settings: one designed to reduce jitter when panning and a second for walking shots. Panasonic calls the system on its VHS PV-460, for \$2,250, Electronic Image Stabilization. Like the Magnavox, it offers A/V dubbing, a high-speed shutter, VISS and VASS. Philips' first U.S. camcorder, the VHS CPJ815, for \$2,699, offers the gimbal-mounted lens and a 10:1 zoom.

Several camcorders offer stabilizing shock absorbers on their tape transport mechanisms instead. These include the Hitachi VHS VM-5100A, for \$1,700, and

*Stabilizers move
camcorders
a giant step
forward.*

Minolta's S-VHS Master Series V-2000. A 50-micron bulge on the Hitachi's head cylinder prevents the tape from rolling, further steadying the tape.

With stabilizing systems, consumer camcorders have moved a giant step closer to the professional realm. The upgraded gear is particularly intriguing to semi-professional camcorder users. And if you're taping weddings, bar mitzvahs and the like, you should not only test-drive such camcorders, but check the high-resolution formats as well.

Real professionals are already using Super VHS camcorders—not consumer versions, but more expensive industrial units. However, as its inevitable response to the success of S-VHS, Sony has come up with a camcorder that just might accommodate both the professional and the semi-professional worlds. Sony's Extended Definition Beta camcorder is a detachable-lens, three-piece machine called the EDC-55. It yields an astonishing 500 lines of horizontal resolution and is the closest thing to a broadcast-quality video camera the semi-professional consumer can buy. Its suggested price is \$7,700.

The EDC-55 features a tape transport stabilizer to reduce jitter, a variable-speed 10:1 zoom lens, a variable shutter, a one-point stereo microphone and a bayonet

continued on page 132

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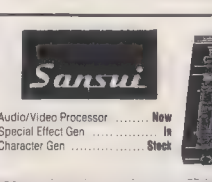
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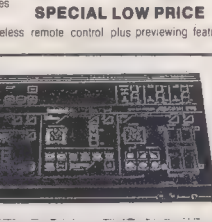
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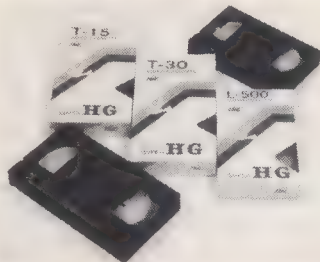
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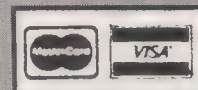
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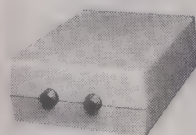
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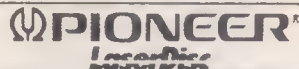
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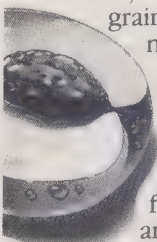
Foods high in fats, salt- or nitrite-cured foods such as ham, and fish and types of sausages smoked by traditional methods should be eaten in moderation.

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cancer alone.



continued from page 125

mount that accepts other lenses.

The price, however, makes most of us feel the limitations of our zeal. Even though few serious home directors sell their productions, most want professional quality without the professional price. They will seek out auto-stabilizing units, Super VHS and advanced features ranging from powerful zooms and time lapse recording to digital special effects and titling facilities.

This migration toward the high end was apparently enough to convince Tamron, a leading optics manufacturer, to introduce its first consumer camcorder. The 8mm CX-7 Digital Movie 8 for \$1,719 has a detachable digital playback control unit with effects that include digital still, slow motion, solarization, strobe and title insertion. The camcorder can store a frame of text that you either draw yourself, create from stencils or cut out of a magazine and

superimpose over a moving video picture. The title will appear in white. It does not have a character generator.

Other camcorders, like Yashica's 8mm KD-1700U, for \$1,695, allow you to superimpose externally-sourced titles in a variety of colors. Sony's new 8mm Handycam—the CCD-F40, for \$1,750—offers eight colors and, like its competitors, superimposes drawings, borders and symbols.

Of course, with the digital-effect camcorders that started to appear a year ago, you can superimpose just about anything on tapes. You can put one still video image in the corner of full-screen action and add effects that include strobe, solarization, mosaic, split screen and picture-in-picture. Another favorite is sepia tone—the brownish look seen in old photographs. Canon brought this feature to shelves in its 8mm E708, for \$1,800.

If you have the time and the money to spend, you'll find that technology is pushing the evolution of home movies toward that ambiguous realm called art, and whether you share the aesthetic of a Frank Capra or a Ken Russell, you'll find something among the newest camcorders to help bring your funkiest fantasies to the television screen nearest you. ■

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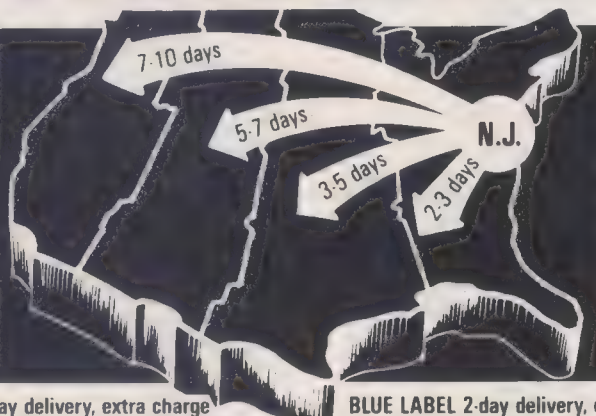
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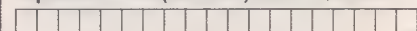
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VIDEO BOOKSHELF

Searching for Spock's brain? Start here.

BY LOU KESTEN

Just like new models of VCRs, video guide books keep coming. The small-screen landscape of kidvid, genre films and videodiscs changes so rapidly there always seems to be room for one more, as well as one more enthusiast with a desperate urge to share his or her opinions. The latest guides are both enlightening and frustrating. Here's how they shape up.

Mick Martin and Marsha Porter, editors of the estimable *Video Movie Guide* have joined with Ed Remitz to create the *Video Movie Guide for Kids* (Ballantine, \$3.50), a parents' guide to the galaxy of videotapes aimed at children. The rating system is simple—tapes are either recommended or not. The criticism is based on aesthetic quality and appropriateness for kids. The authors dutifully warn parents about violence, commercialization and that most nefarious corrupter of young minds, sloppily animation.

The most useful sections deal with educational and animated tapes—subjects not covered well in other tape guides. The educational section offers a helpful directory of places to find obscure tapes, while the cartoon chapter provides an elementary education in animation. Parents will learn to distinguish the wonderful old Max Fleischer *Popeye* from the atrocious 1980s *Popeye and Friends*, to appreciate Tom and Jerry while avoiding any work Hanna and Barbera did after leaving MGM, and to steer clear of Transformers, He-Man and other toy advertisements disguised as kidvid.

Much of the book is a guide to feature films that parents can enjoy with their kids, mainly comedies with some Western and science-fiction flicks thrown in. Many of the selections are inspired, some (like *Buckaroo Banzai*) are a little off the wall. The result is satisfying. Martin, Porter and Remitz have assembled a valuable and entertaining video guide for concerned parents.

One of the sources credited in the VMGK is the Video School House, a Cali-

fornia-based distributor of non-theatrical videotapes. **Knowledge Collection 1988** (McGraw-Hill, \$8.95) is its annual listing of the thousands of instructional tapes on the market. The *Collection* looks at over 6,000 how-to tapes, on everything from playing a guitar to flying an airplane, arranged by subject and indexed by title. Readers can call a toll-free number to buy or rent any of the titles, and can register to receive free quarterly updates.

Video collectors who prefer horror flicks to how-to tapes will want to check out John Stanley's **Revenge of the Creature Features Movie Guide** (Creatures at Large Press, Pacifica, Calif., \$11.95). Stanley, the former host of a Saturday night horror movie series in Oakland, Calif. reviews some 4,000 horror and science-fiction flicks in this volume. This self-published tome is a labor of love, and if you can ignore the layout, frequent misspellings and awkward prose, it has some real insights to offer.

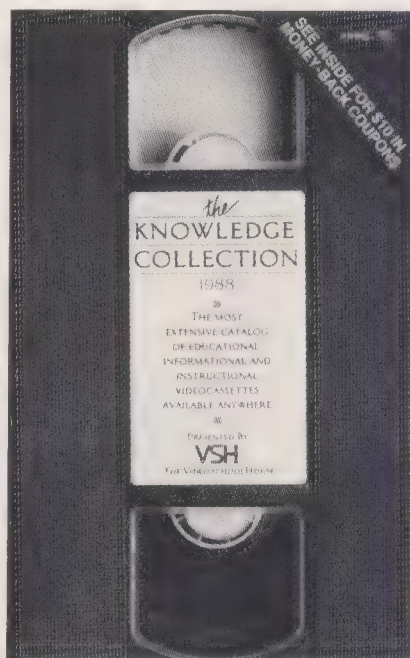
Stanley covers much the same ground explored by Michael Weldon in the invalua-

ble *Psychotronic Encyclopedia of Film*, adding more recent movies and some marginal genre films like Kenji Mizoguchi's *Ugetsu*. And while Stanley's writing style isn't going to threaten Pauline Kael, most of his criticisms hit the mark. Trekkies will find it a good starting point in any search for the *Star Trek* episode about Spock's brain-napping, and junk film fans will find many delightful descriptions about movies of which they've never heard, but are now sure to look for in their local video stores.

The Laser Video Disc Companion (New York Zoetrope, \$16.95) compiles reviews from Douglas Pratt's *Laser Disc Newsletter*. Like most laserphiles, Pratt has an aesthetic ax to grind—most of the reviews concentrate more on image and sound reproduction than on such minor details as script, acting and direction. That's useful for folks who want to show off their audio/visual systems, but not of much value to people who are interested in finding an entertaining film for the night.

Perhaps it's fortunate, however, that Pratt doesn't dwell on content, because what he does have to say about it is usually misguided, uninformative and sometimes plain dumb. The *Companion* is of little use even as a reference, for Pratt's selections are mysteriously haphazard. Why review *Top Secret!* and not *Airplane!*? Why *Star Trek III* and not *Star Trek I, II or IV*? The *Companion* is sloppily assembled and not recommended.

Finally, the ultimate in special-interest video guides: a book about one 17-episode series of tapes. Matthew White and Jaffer Ali's **The Official Prisoner Companion** (Warner, \$9.95) is a treasure trove for fans of the classic British series. *The Prisoner* has been perhaps the subject of more debate than any other TV series, and White and Ali take a stab at even the most obscure questions about its creation and significance. Much of the trivia is esoteric ("The extras used in the chess game during the episode *Checkmate* were paid two pounds, ten shillings for each of their performances."), but meticulous fans will relish the amount of information every installment of the series.



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INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

A	ADVANCED VIDEO DYNAMICS.....	108
	ACCESSORALL.....	134
	ALLISON INDUSTRIES.....	134
	AUDIO VIDEO CENTER.....	108
	AZDEN.....	105
B	BATTERY PARK.....	123
C	CAMERA WORLD.....	127
	CLASSIFIEDS.....	114, 115, 116, 117, 128, 129, 130, 131
	CBS CD CLUB.....	21
	CBS VIDEO CLUB.....	10, 11
	CBS/FOX.....	27, 33
	COMPETITIVE CAMERA.....	134
	COMPUTABILITY.....	94
D	DISCOUNT VIDEO ACCESSORIES.....	96, 97
	DIRECT CAMERA WAREHOUSE.....	89, 90, 91, 92, 93
	DIGITAL TECH.....	104
	DIVERSE.....	110
E	ELECTRONIC WHOLESALERS.....	32, 99
	EMB.....	102, 103
F	FOTOCCELL.....	121
	FRIES.....	78
H	HIGH VOLTAGE.....	94
	HOME BUYERS CLUB.....	108
I	INSTANT REPLAY.....	31
	IVE.....	77
J	J & W.....	124
L	LASER LINE PLUS.....	132
	LE BARON.....	98
M	MAIL ORDER GUIDELINES.....	107
	MAXIMUM EXPOSURE.....	119
	MFJ.....	87
	MGM UA.....	15
	MUSIC VIDEO WAREHOUSE.....	88
	MOVIE TIME.....	124
	MULTI MEDIA.....	111, 112, 113, 117, 118
N	NELSON.....	5, 7, 9
	NEW STAR.....	8
	NEC.....	13
	NOT JUST VIDEO.....	95
	NEW VIDEO.....	81
O	OAK TREE.....	46
	ORION.....	6, 66
P	PANASONIC PRO.....	47
	PIONEER.....	C2, 3
	PHOTRON.....	85
	PRO VIDEO.....	100
	P.O. BOYS.....	116
	PLANET.....	135
R	RADIO SHACK.....	63
	RCA ACCESSORIES.....	24
	RCA.....	34
	RECOTON.....	33
	RELIABLE.....	122
	RETAILERS.....	82
	REPUBLIC.....	23
S	SAMSONITE.....	29
	SIMA.....	25
	SLIK.....	65
	SONATEL.....	51
	SNW.....	127
	SUPER VIDEO.....	132
	SCRIPTOVISION.....	124
	SMILE.....	125
	SUNHILL.....	124
T	TAG VIDEO.....	113
	TOSHIBA.....	45
	TRI-STATE.....	104
U	UNITED ELECTRONICS.....	127
V	VERTEX.....	26
	VIDEO DIRECT DISTRIBUTORS.....	108, 122
	VIDEO SALES.....	126
W	WALL STREET.....	106
	WDS.....	101

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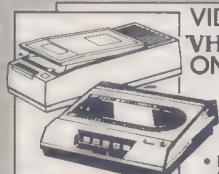
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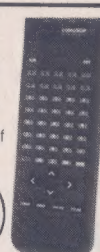


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OFF THE AIR

Taming the cable beast

BY BOB BREWIN

Back in 1984 the cable television industry managed to convince Congress that it needed just a bit of legislative help to survive. Congress, ever willing to listen to a powerful lobby, obliged, and then some, passing legislation that in retrospect looks like a case of favoring the fox in a hen house. What Congress did, in fact, was to take away the power of local jurisdictions to regulate almost any aspect of the cable television industry. At the same time it effectively curbed the only other business that could provide effective competition: the telephone companies.

Senator Al Gore of Tennessee, for instance, believes cable's refusal to sell programming to third-party outfits like the National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative—which wants to package services for dish owners—is blatantly anticompetitive. As a result, he is pushing for passage of a

bill that would give third-party home satellite packagers parity with cable. Meanwhile, TCI and other multiple system operators (MSOs) with cable programming companies have developed their own packages. If dish owners do not buy from companies like TCI, they're stuck buying a la carte—and anyone who's contemplated a menu knows that means higher prices.

But a process that started merely as an attempt to obtain equitable pricing for dish owners has turned the spotlight on numerous other abuses by the cable industry.

Pressure is increasing on the Hill to modify the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984 that effectively deregulated the industry. Key House Telecommunications Committee staffers believe that, instead of giving the industry a "level playing field" vis a vis broadcasters, as was intended, the legislation created a giant with an insatiable appetite. Much of that appetite since passage of the Cable Act, according to Representative Charles Schumer of New York, is

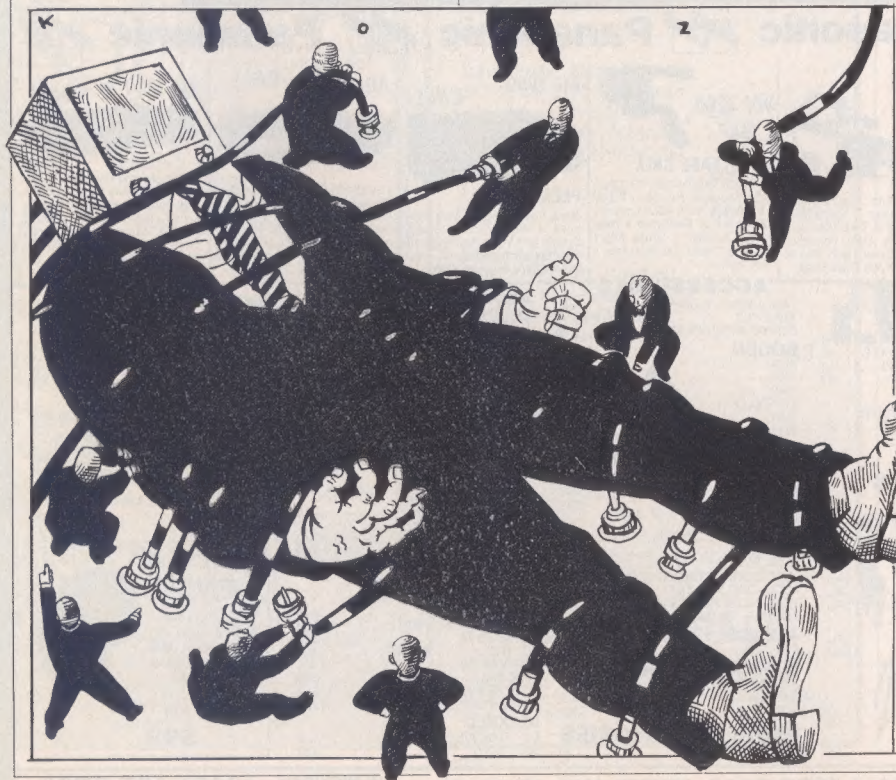
for "inordinate" rate increases.

The cable industry's bullying tactics may backfire if regulators decide to unleash those competitors the industry really fears: the seven regional telephone companies created after the break-up of AT&T. The biggest gift the industry received in the Cable Act was language excluding these multi-billion-dollar companies from offering programming services. Judge Harold Greene, the federal jurist who handled that case, also prohibited the Bell operating companies from offering such services. But both Congress and the Reagan Administration want those restrictions repealed.

What would this do? The cable industry would have seven thousand-pound gorillas for competition instead of the puny seven-pound home satellite and wireless cable distributors. Considering their ample financial resources, the Bell companies could easily create their own programming or buy existing programmers outright.

The competition would be real. Right now cable has the only multi-channel, video pipeline into the home. But as more telephone companies replace their copper wires with high-capacity fiber optic lines, their ability to offer multi-channel services will increase. In fact, Bellcore Research, the development arm of the seven phone companies, envisions services that will outdo anything the cable industry could come up with in the near term. For example, Bellcore foresees building a video data bank that will contain every movie ever made. Whether a subscriber wanted *Birth of a Nation* or *The Last Emperor*, the phone companies could deliver it instantly. And while one home is watching the first movie, another could watch the second. Do you want high definition television now instead of waiting a decade for the FCC to figure out how to let broadcasters offer it? The Bell companies say they can do that, too.

So maybe cable's "bully boy" attitude will eventually benefit the consumer by getting regulators to unshackle the phone companies. I would like the opportunity to choose between video pipelines operated by the cable biz and the phone biz, but now I have no choice. My block, like most areas of the country, is served by only one cable company. And that's a really loose definition of service, since it has not wired the block yet. But I do have a telephone wire....



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